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THROUGH THE GATES OF THE NETHERLANDS

THE GREAT TOWER OF LEEUWARDEN

THROUGH THE GATES OF THE NETHERLANDS

By MARY E. WALLER

Author of "The Wood-Carver of 'Lympus," "A Daughter of the Rich," "Sanna," Etc.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS, AFTER LALANNE AND OTHERS, BY

A. MONTFERRAND

BOSTON

LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY

1907

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TO MY MOTHER

AND

THOSE WHO WERE WITH ME

IN THE NETHERLANDS

160747

AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE spelling of Dutch proper names in this book is neither wholly according to the Dutch glossary, nor is it consistently Anglicized; but to give some uniformity to the work, the Dutch spelling has been followed wherever possible.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	James and I	1
II.	The Stork's Nest	10
III.	Wholly Domestic	25
IV.	The Dutch Oat	33
V.	Holland Within	46
VI.	An Humble Source of Dutch Art	57
VII.	The Gate Beautiful	63
VIII.	The Miller's Son	68
IX.	Scheveningen	81
X.	Some Diversions and Social Functions	97
XI.	The Knocking at the Gates	122
XII.	The New Pilgrim Fathers	132
XIII.	The City of the Crossed Keys	141
XIV.	An Ex-Voto Offering	145
XV.	Fields Elysian	154
XVI.	The Heart of Holland	159
XVII.	How We Saw Amsterdam	166
XVIII.	The Don Quixote Country	177
XIX.	Alkmaar's Weigh House	180
XX.	An International Complication	187
XXI.	The Port of Hoorn	195
XXII.	An Ancient of Days	204
XXIII.	A Frisian Paris	208

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXIV.	By Still Waters	223
XXV.	The Rhine Daughters	239
XXVI.	St. John's of Bois-le-Duc	247
XXVII.	Great Head Gate	254
XXVIII.	Dort	266
XXIX.	At the Gates of the Sea	277
XXX.	The Swimming Lion	285
XXXI.	The Bells of Middelburg	295
XXXII.	Harking Back to Caesar	313
XXXIII.	The Peace Conference at The Hague	321

ILLUSTRATIONS

THE GREAT TOWER OF LEEUWARDEN . *Frontispiece*

A CLASSIC OF THE HAGUE, VŸVERBERG, *Vignette on Title*

OUR DUTCH COAT-OF-ARMS . . . . . *Page* 20

"HOLLAND WITHIN," Artz . . . . . " 54
From a photograph.

"THE MILLER OF LEYDEN," Rembrandt . " 68
From a photograph by Frans Hanfstaengl.

"A TOILER OF THE SEA," Israëls . . . . " 86
From a photograph.

DESOLATION, OUD-VOSMEER . . . . . " 127

THE EAST GATE OF DELFT . . . . . " 137
From an old plate.

GENUINE OLD DELFT . . . . . " 138

OLD ZŸL GATE, LEYDEN . . . . . " 145

ST. BAVON AND THE MEAT MARKET, HAARLEM, " 156

AMSTERDAM . . . . . " 169

ALKMAAR'S WEIGH HOUSE . . . . . " 180

THE PORT OF HOORN . . . . . " 199

BY STILL WATERS, GOUDA . . . . . " 228

OUR DEAR LADY TOWER, AMERSFOORT . " 236

THE WATER GATE AT AMERSFOORT . . . " 238

APPROACH TO GORINCHEM . . . . . " 257

A REMINISCENCE OF VENICE, DORDRECHT . " 268

A BROKEN SEA GATE, OUD-VOSMEER, MARCH 12, 13, 1906 . . . . . " 283

South Harbor Gate, Zierikzee . . . . *Page* 288
The Abbey Gate . . . . . " 301
Middelburg Towers . . . . . " 312
William the Silent (1533–1584), Key, Mauritshuis, The Hague . . . . . " 328
One of the very few portraits of the Prince painted from life.

Plan of the Seashore of Walcheren with the Remains of Ancient Domburg . " 316

THROUGH THE GATES OF THE NETHERLANDS

CHAPTER I

JAMES AND I

THERE has been no monotony in our lives, James' and mine. I account for this fact on the ground of our having kept on hand during our married life a large stock of ideals, and living in the anticipation of realizing some of them at some time. And just here I may as well state a few facts about ourselves. James and I belong to the wealthier class of Americans, that is, the truly wealthy class which is a large one in our land. Lest I be misunderstood I make the following statement concerning what we look upon as our assets.

In the first place we are extraordinarily rich in blessed memories of those who have loved us — who may love us still for aught we know. This constitutes our inherited wealth. In addition to this we made early in life, we are not yet quite middle-aged, two or three large investments in old-fashioned stock, the returns from which have been enormous, namely; a marriage for love fifteen years ago and a block of solid friendships of both men and women, which may be counted in separate shares by five fingers on the one hand, and two on the other. For collateral

securities on these we have an open fire for all friendly shins that need toasting and all hearts that feel a need to disburden in the flame-lighted dusk, as well for the jest and merry laughter that spring from young hearts, and others that can never grow old.

Moveover, there is an extra seat at our table for the man, woman, or child who may need or wish to occupy it. It is our memorial to our only boy, and by means of it we have entertained many an angel unawares. Little by little during the years, we have gathered some eight hundred pleasant acquaintances about us who, although they turn their backs upon us from the bookshelves, open out most freely, if we approach them in the right mood, and yield their multitude of thoughts, sustaining, instructive, helpful, uplifting, nor ever refuse of their largess — acquaintances worth having, or so it has seemed to me. If I show you above the shelves a few choice etchings and old engravings, of which both James and I are justly proud, I think I have given a fair statement of our entire wealth, real and common.

In actual money we have James' fluctuating income which he earns literally by the sweat of his brow, for he is an architect by profession and a day laborer for the sake of it. In fat years it swells visibly to three thousand, in the lean ones it diminishes to one third of that. I can recall four years when we had only six hundred, and in those four we were richer than we ever dreamed we could be, for the gift of a child, ours for five years, filled them

with treasures untold, undreamed of. Since then the words *rich* and *poor* have their own meaning for us. This is why I mention money as the last item among our assets.

On a certain evening in November in the year of Our Lord nineteen hundred and five, we were in our living-room which is library, sitting-room and parlor in one. James was reading and I was attempting a little sewing beneath the lamplight. In reality I was listening to the driving of the sleet against the windows and the periodical roar of a northeast gale that, sweeping in from the Atlantic, howled and shrieked as it found itself transiently confined in the strait-jacket of a narrow street in old Boston. It was a wild night, and as I rose to draw the curtains in order to shut out the chill sight of snow-plastered panes, I stopped for a moment to look at my favorite etching of the great tower of Leeuwarden that hangs over the centre bookshelf. I was wondering if it ever would fall to my lot to see it in reality when James spoke.

"Persis, I've been coming lately to the conclusion that I need a change."

"May I inquire what might be the nature of this special change?" I asked without turning. I may as well state here and now that James' need of a change is constitutional, and materializes suddenly at the most unexpected times and in the most untoward places. Hence the lack of monotony in our lives.

"Oh, a mental change —"

"Mental change! Likelier a change of heart." I turned to him and looked him straight in the eyes; whereupon he telegraphed to me by the special wireless marital code known to husbands and wives who are one in soul. I have told him for the past fifteen years that he has speaking eyes, and he has never failed to assure me that it is fortunate for him that he is thus equipped, for in my presence his tongue is an atrophied member.

I confess this message gave me a shock, for it said as plainly as words could have said: We'll close the house and go — somewhere. And I had just finished my quince-preserving! That very day I had reviewed with a housewife's pride and satisfaction the dozens of jars and glasses of delectables I had filled for the larder. I had put up the heavy hangings at the windows, and dusted every book on the shelves, polished all the brass for the fenders, and prepared generally for a snug stay-at-home winter. Then this deluge!

"Now, James Moulton, where are you going?"

"To just the one place in the world where I can get the change."

"Where is that?" I demanded, for I was curious to know my fate.

"Holland!" He exclaimed triumphantly. "I've been planning the whole thing. You know well enough you've been longing for it so for the last ten years that you've fairly water on the brain. Now deny it if you can."

It was an impeachment of the severest kind, yet I knew I must plead guilty. Holland had been an ideal to be realized for so long!

"But in winter, James! Holland in winter. Who ever heard of such a thing?"

"Nobody; that is why we're going to adopt it, and somebody may hear of it and take it up. This is my first off year, and I can take my work along with me. Do say *yes*, Persis!"

"Say *yes*, indeed! What would be the use of my saying no?" I must say I was a little irritated that the whole thing should have been planned, even if by my nearest and dearest, without once consulting me. And after all the years James and I had dreamed over it together! It was so like a man and a husband that I lost my patience.

"If you had given me just a hint of what you have been planning for so long —" I began severely enough, but was cut short by a burst of laughter.

"I can't see any jest," I began again, and this time my voice sounded a bit too tart even for James. I saw that by his eyes. "It's all very well to be sitting in the bosom of one's family —"

"Not the bosom this time, Persis; nothing so near as that;" and the Incorrigible actually had the audacity to throw his free arm around my neck. I tried to put it away for I was in no mood for a caress, but failed as usual. I ignored him and went on:

— "And suddenly by a preconcerted arrangement of that bosom —"

"Hear, hear!" I gave him a look before which he, to all appearances, quailed.

— "Be cast like bread upon the waters not to return until after many days."

James took me by the shoulders, turned me to the wall, and, catching my head gently between both hands, lifted my face to the massive tower of Leeuwarden still unfinished, like a master-builder's thwarted aspiration.

"Look at that, little mother." It was all he said for the moment, but I understood. When he calls me that, the thought of us both is as one; and well he knows that I must say *yes* to anything, to everything when he speaks to me in that voice.

"I had made no plans, Persis, until an hour ago; but you and I have talked Holland so much and for so long, that when you stopped on your way to the window and looked up at the etching so longingly I felt — the need of a change. Now, you'll go!"

"Well, I may, if you promise to stay for the spring and the tulip fields of Haarlem."

"Tulips by the acre, little mother, hurrah!" Therewith James turned boy again and, making some unmentionable pun about "achers for two lips," caught me in his arms and gave me such a hug that I was breathless. Of course after that I consented in due form, and we sat before the grate fire and made plans into the small hours of the morning.

"I'm going on two conditions," said James emphatically, "two conditions that will make for my peace of mind in my work."

"And those are?" I asked.

"No Dutch *pensions*, alias boarding-houses, for me; and no domestic worries of any kind —"

"You have so many at home, James!" I permitted myself that sarcasm, for James' inability to wrestle with the most simple problems of housekeeping is proverbial. He has never yet driven a nail straight, and although he is an architect I put in the closets and practicalities, even to kitchen dressers, for his clients — and he gets the credit of being a practical idealist! Idealist he is, too much of a one at times, but strictly practical, never. Naturally I say nothing of this in public for I am so proud of his work, but privately I get just one-tenth of one per cent every time for "pickings." I've been saving the pickings for the long-dreamed-of Holland.

"I assume you are giving me to understand that you will have an establishment of your own in the Low Countries. May I inquire at this distance what is the nature of this home? I'd like to be fore-warned, as housekeeping anywhere is not a particularly easy matter," I said with some asperity, for I had visions of a green canal boat, a stretch of very wet canal ending in a vista of mist and bridges, and James calling for his shaving-water and hot towels at unearthly hours.

"Oh, just a regular home," he said after a few minutes of deep thought and in answer to my question; "a good

open fire, my books, and lots of hot water. You can have your own way and say in everything else."

"Indeed! And I'm supposed to be grateful for the doubtful privilege of struggling in an unknown tongue with a foreign servant to obtain for my lord and master an open fire and plenty of hot water!"

"Oh, we'll get along. I'll turn in and help. You speak German, and we both get on well enough in French. If they can't understand either, I'll try good solid Anglo-Saxon on them. That's Low Dutch, anyway. We'll get on, don't you worry."

"I won't if you'll promise not to ask for anything absolutely preposterous like hot North Sea baths on tap, or storks' eggs for an *omelette soufflée*. What is it now?" I demanded of him, for his hands were clasped behind his head, his head on the back of the chair, his face upturned to the ceiling, and in his eyes the far-away look that prognosticates the bringing down and bagging of an ideal. I have known it too long to mistake it.

"Speaking of storks," he said in what I call his mooning voice, "I must make one other condition: I can't live in a Dutch house that hasn't a stork's nest and some birds on the roof; and perhaps it might be possible to get a house with the lines of the roof thoroughly satisfactory—"

"For goodness' sake, James Moulton, come down from your heights!" I cried impatiently. "If you want a stork's nest you'll have to have one made to order and take an incubator along with you to hatch your own birds;

but don't lay any such burden as that on my frail shoulders. And as for the lines of your roof, that is your business, not mine."

James rubbed his hands in his glee. "Oh, but it is good to hear her! Nothing like a change, Persis, to keep one young. We'll make it go."

I had my doubts; but I said nothing, for I didn't like to quench his enthusiasm. It has always been the oil for all my domestic machinery and, besides, was there not the great tower of Leeuwarden looming before me in the northern mists beyond the Zuider Zee? Were not the bright tulip-fields of Haarlem luring me onward, perhaps to my destruction domestically, but very surely to the realization of one, at least, of my ideals? Ah, it is wise, wise beyond belief, to keep on hand a large stock of ideals even in the most prosaic life, in the most restricted circumstances, for it may chance that once in a lifetime one of the many may be realized.

That was my thought as I fell asleep just before daybreak. James' last word for the night was: "I must tell Ben to-morrow; perhaps he can arrange to join us in the spring."

Ben Hardon is James' special younger friend to whom he looks for enthusiastic masculine response. I foresee domestic difficulty if James is to ask many more friends over to Holland for the spring.

CHAPTER II

THE STORK'S NEST

BUT where to make the home, in Amsterdam or The Hague? This was the all-important point to settle. The December voyage was behind us, and, owing to a very low tide, we had been transferred to a tug just as we were off Vlaardingen, and were cutting through the waters of the Maas at a torpedo-boat speed.

"It's Holland, fast enough," said James, as he peered into the dense mist that, suddenly enveloping us, forced the boat to slacken speed, "for it's the wettest thing so far I've seen; the Atlantic doesn't compare with it."

I went down into the cabin, for it was really too dismal, and first impressions are apt to discount anticipated pleasures. The boat almost stopped in order to feel her way among the shipping, and James took that time — he has not in crucial moments a supreme sense of the fitness of things — to demand a decision in regard to the home: Where should it be?

James had said again and again he didn't care where he settled providing he had the right conditions for a snug winter-harbor, plenty of hot water and an open fire. I fairly shivered when he spoke so frequently as he did of hot water; for in the dank, dark mist of the Maas, on a

chill December afternoon, in the unheated cabin of a Dutch tug that was half under water, it did seem as if there never could be such a commodity in the whole land. And James is peculiar; that is, he appears so to me. Other wives may not have had my experience. He works well only when he has what he wants. He calls it "having the right conditions." If he does not work well, he is apt to give up effort altogether; and when that point is reached there is for him little left worth living for. I am not logical, so James says, but I am consistent in drawing conclusions even when my premises are wrong. To make a perfectly clear statement: when James does not work, my mind is reduced, metaphorically, to skin and bones in my struggles to make "conditions right." Hereafter if I speak overmuch and feelingly of hot water and other prosaic matters, I trust I may be excused. In view of all these inner workings, I felt the time had come with the stopping of the tug, to make the decision myself. It would end the suspense.

"We'll go to The Hague," I said bravely. "I never heard of anyone choosing that city for the winter, and we might as well settle there as any where, especially as this particular expedition seems to be following the lines of a wild goose's flight. Perhaps there'll be a little dry land about the capital to compensate for so much water around it. Besides, you'll be on the spot if you decide to compete for the new Peace Palace designs."

James heaved a relieved sigh. "That's so," he said emphatically, and squared his shoulders as if shaking off some intolerable burden, although it was I who had assumed the responsibilities of the situation and was to bear the heat of the day — that is, if there were such a thing as heat in Holland. "Then it's settled," he added with marked firmness after *my* making the decision (I must confess it is often the case with James). "I'm going up on deck."

At that moment something lightened into the cabin windows. The tug quivered, then shot forward again up the river. I, too, felt as if the machinery of our Holland undertaking had begun to work: We were going to the Hague. Just then James called down the companion-way:

"Persis, come; come up quickly!"

I rushed up on deck and, lo, it was Holland! The Holland I had pictured in imagination, that I had seen portrayed in etching and water-color, in paintings of the Dutch School and in the porcelain of Delft. I caught my breath just once, then linked my arm in James' that I might have something more than a hand to squeeze, for words failed me.

The fog was rolling back into the west. We were moving rapidly in a semi-transparent mist that lay upon the current of the river. All about us was dim, mysterious movement. The mist enveloping us burned slowly into amber, then, dispersing without warning, showed us the Maas at Rotterdam. The river was running red gold in

the rays of the setting sun, the sun blazing golden red from a narrow horizon space of dun carbuncle beneath the black bank of fog; and black, too, against this low-spreading glory, a hundred windmills swung their black arms above the green ribbons of dykes, till it seemed as if a flock of huge rooks were hovering in mid-air and making preparation to alight on the multiple black towers of Rotterdam.

Within twenty-four hours after our arrival at The Hague I put myself in motion to find our *Stork's Nest*, as we had agreed to call the home — a concession to James' ideals. James was already lost to the world and his wife in a second-hand book-shop where he was rummaging about for "finds" in architectural plates. I felt this to be a relief, for when it comes to house-hunting instead of house-making he becomes both abject and desperate. I called up by telephone, through the courtesy of the porter at the hospitable *Oude Doelen* (it is necessary to make this statement, for my command of Dutch at this stage of proceedings was limited to two words: *Hollandsche spoorwegmaatschappij* and *ja*) three real estate agents, and each had a half-dozen houses for us. But what houses!

I scoured the capital of the Netherlands as faithfully, if not as literally, as the Dutch *werkvrouws* themselves. I lost my way on tram lines and was taken back to the hotel in *urbaines*, the city cabs. These, by the way, told severely on my nerves. We had come to

Holland hoping to economize, in some directions at least, and here before me in these *urbaines* were automatic black and white affairs as large as a Waterbury kitchen clock, that in my very face and eyes ticked off the meters as I drove, and recorded my sins of expenditure in the shape of florins and Dutch cents! I registered a vow, as the "clock" registered five gulden against me, that when I should have found a house I would for the rest of the winter use the trams or go afoot. But the houses! Oh, the houses! Upper houses, lower houses, whole houses, villas, mansions, palaces, but no house for us.

I found the common run of Dutch city residences built very generally upon one plan, a poor one at that: a *beneden*, or lower house, and a *boven*, or upper house. Each dwelling has two street doors; one leads into the lower house which, by reason of its situation, is dismal in the extreme. It has few rooms and little light. The other opens into a narrow passage and upon a steep flight of stairs that leads to the upper house. This consists of two stories, with three rooms and a kitchen on the first floor; the other story contains three bedrooms reached by a second ladder; a third climb brings one to the servant's room in the garret. Throughout the house there are cold halls! In all my experience of house-hunting in many a city large and small, I have never seen the equal for steepness and crookedness of the regulation Dutch stair-case, nor an arrangement of rooms less conducive to comfort.

To find a furnished house was not possible. Everybody was most courteous and willing to do his utmost — for remuneration; but everyone gave the same answer: "It is not the custom in The Hague. You may have an unfurnished house for a year, two years, three if you will; you may take a house for such a period and have it furnished by the month; but let a furnished house for four or five months!—oh, no, it is not the custom in The Hague." With that I had to be discontent.

"Never mind," I said to myself as, in the early dark— I think the sun set about three that day — I drove back, footsore, pridesore and a little heartsore with homesickness, to the *Old Shooting Gallery*, now the hospitable hostelry on what was once the ancient *Tourney Field*, "never mind, I'll break the news gently to James by telling him there are Dutch dykes, of custom, of which he has never heard; and to-morrow we'll try *pensions*."

I felt for a moment really discouraged, and lighted one of my pocket lucifers to look at the automatic-conscience which had just given a diabolical *click* loud enough to be ominous of ten gulden. Then I fell to laughing so heartily at my own discomfiture that I entered the hotel in good spirits. James met me like a good west wind that blows the air free from mists of every kind. He was swinging a key big enough to unlock our Boston State House door.

"I've got it!" he almost shouted, sacrificing English in his enthusiasm; "I've taken it, too!"

"Got what? Taken what?" James began to laugh.

"Not — not whiskey, James?" I confess I was shocked, for his habits at home are perfectly temperate, but the extreme wetness of the climate combined with his enthusiasm aroused my suspicions. For answer he continued to laugh immoderately, or rather howl, for he rolled over on the ample Dutch sofa and I piled cushions on his head to smother his hilarity. When he was calm, he told me. I congratulated myself that he had not given me time to tell my own experience.

"I've taken a house, that's all."

"That's all!" I was reduced to an echo. "Where?" I asked faintly. I was fearful lest in his enthusiasm he had rented one of those dismal *beneden* houses and would depend upon me, and possibly my "pickings," to make it liveable. Horrors!

"In Scheveningen."

"Scheveningen!" I was aghast. "Why, it's a fishing-village on the North Sea."

"Just so; and a mighty picturesque place it is too. I've seen roofs enough to-day to make my future secure if I can incorporate them in some of my beach houses."

"Oh, James!" I fairly groaned; for when he begins on architectural lines he is always sure to be off his base in all things practical.

"What's the matter?"

"We can't live like storks on roofs, you know that as well as I; if you'd been climbing up to as many of them

as I have the last two days in these dreadful *boven* houses, you would understand my feelings about roofs."

"No *boven* houses for me, my dear; I've taken a villa."

"A villa! Is it convenient?" I asked a little severely.

"Well, I can't tell you so very much in detail about the inside, but the outside is really beautiful: solid brick, whitewashed, moss-green tiled roof with just a line of Venetian red showing along the eaves —"

"Oh, James!" It was a wail this time; I could not help it.

"Yes, Persis, you will love it. There's English ivy by the dozen square yards all over the walls, and a big holly hedge in front; it harmonizes with the roof —"

"Stop this very minute, James Moulton, and tell me if there is a decent kitchen and a room that is dry, and how many there are." I have to bring him down from his heights abruptly. It is the only way to make him feel the jar of the fall. My last remark really brought him to himself.

"Honestly, Persis, I can't say; but there are rooms enough, seven or eight, and an extra one for Ben when he comes. I looked through them and they seemed all right; and — and — I think, yes, I'm sure the man said every convenience. There's a bathroom anyway, I made sure of that. Of course I took his word for the inside; but I examined the outside thoroughly I assure you. Everything is in apple-pie order without disturbing the harmony —"

"There you go again, James Moulton. Do come down to the practical and tell me for how long you've taken it."

"For seven months. He wouldn't let it for less."

"And you've engaged that house for seven months without knowing whether we shall like it or not? Well, I never!"

"Like it? Why, of course you'll like it and be mighty sorry to leave it, too." I was silent; for I have learned that speech is indiscretion when one's enthusiastic husband takes too much for granted. James looked a little crestfallen. Seeing that, I asked:

"When do we move in?" He brightened again.

"Oh, to-morrow morning. We'll go out there as soon as it's light enough, about eleven, and you can put things to rights while I run back into town to secure those plates on French châteaux I had sent up on approval last night. Come, let's have dinner and drink success to our *Stork's Nest.*" I humored him, but I determined to drive out alone to *The Stork's Nest*, for James always confuses me more than he helps when he has architectural plates on his mind; besides, I wanted to be alone in case the house should prove a disappointment to me. I felt in duty bound as a good wife not to discourage him by letting him see this.

Scheveningen! What a word to conjure with! And its magic is the magic of woods and waters, of homes

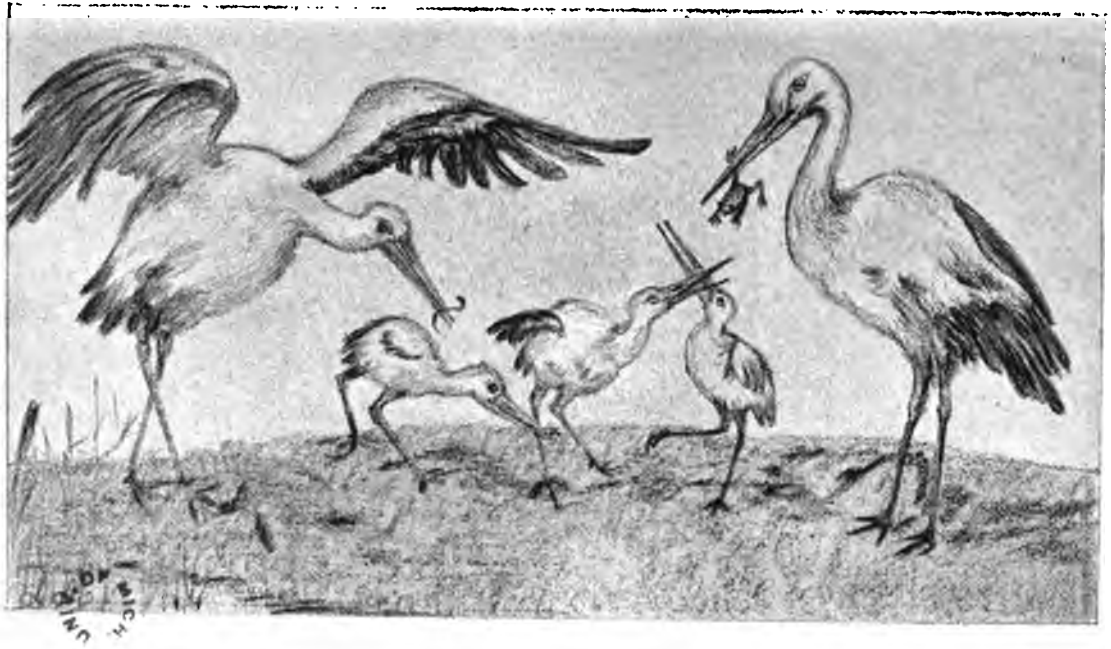
that would serve for illustrations in *A Thousand and One Nights*, and of a simple fishing village that literally lives from the largess of the North Sea, which dominates it spiritually as well as physically. I began to realize what a magical word it is, as I drove out from The Hague that December noon and turned into the Old Scheveningen Road that runs straight for a mile and a half, beneath one of the eight aisles of magnificent forest trees, to the fishing-village by the sea. The low, pale sunshine of Holland's short winter days struck athwart the myriad sturdy boles that showed bright green—the color of eel-grass as seen beneath clear sea-water—in the magical light of an atmosphere which is unlike anything known to us across the ocean. Here on this long avenue, unique in Europe it is said, there is no solitude, but life, life every where. Scheveningen women by the dozen lighten the long, green arcades with their immaculate white caps, their glistening gold cap-pins, and the broad, silver bands that hold the hair in place. The full capes, falling below the waist, are of all colors: mauve, pink, pea-green, purple, burnt-sienna brown, Gobelin blue, pomegranate—every one a tint an old master might have envied. They leave an impression of tropical brightness of movement in this almost unreal woodland setting. The swing of their multitudinous petticoats, thirteen for the well-to-do among them, has something of the placid rise and fall of the great fishing-boats when they rest like gulls on the slow swell of the North Sea.

My wonder increased as we turned into the avenue leading to a height of land in the woods. Everywhere about me were beautiful villas, the walls graced with masses of English ivy. The hedges surrounding them, of thrifty holly or shining oleander, were glistening in the sunshine, the lawns, in which they were set, green with the grass that is nourished by continual moisture. Here and there a gay marigold still bloomed among the universal green. Once I saw two pink rosebuds just about to open. Holly berries and roses, marigolds and oleander hedges, and everywhere the columned green aisles of the forest trees. I was not prepared for these.

The villas were soon left behind. Another turn and the transformation was completed. We were on a slight elevation, in a plantation of young pine, overlooking the wide-stretching Scheveningen woods which lay behind me. Before me, miles to the north, spread the "Sahara" of the famous North Sea dunes. Beneath me there was an irregular huddle of tiny roofs, red, and black, their crooked lines of continuance marking the lanes and alleys, the "closes," even, of the fishing-village. Beyond all was the sea, opalescent under the changing lights of the low sun.

But, oh, *The Stork's Nest!* I was at the very door before I knew it to be my own. It was, as James had said, satisfactorily charming. A holly hedge ran zig-zag before it, and behind it the pines formed a low background for the white, ivy-draped walls. A little garden

OUR DUTCH COAT-OF-ARMS



at the side counted three winding gravel paths, and all of them led to a high wrought-iron gate in the ivy-covered fence. It stood open, and through it I caught a glimpse of the great dunes reaching into and blending with the gray of the sea.

But what of the within? I unlocked the front door, and then went my way on a tour of inspection. It is strange, but I have remarked it often: I can strain every nerve following my own practical methods in order to attain to some desired end or to carry out a certain undertaking, and when, at last, I find myself both confounded and worn out by the balking of stiff-necked circumstance, James will suddenly appear upon the scene with all the enthusiasm of a boy, to inform me that it fell in his way to secure in a moment what I had been struggling for days to obtain! This process was repeated in the finding of *The Stork's Nest*. It has always passed my comprehension how James brought it all about. His account of it has lacked a certain coherence; but putting two and three together, I made out that he met a man at the second-hand bookshop in The Hague, and the two found common ground in architecture. This man had a friend who owned a villa in Scheveningen. The friend had gone to the East Indies for a year, and James' acquaintance-of-the-bookshop was left in charge of the estate, hence he felt at liberty to rent it to us.

Privately I have my doubts whether the gentleman in the East Indies ever had knowledge of his tenants; but

James paid the rent in advance, and a paid house rent for seven months gives one a certain audacious confidence in future possession. In view of this fact, I accepted what the gods had seen fit to provide and ceased to probe further into the matter.

When I had looked at *The Stork's Nest* until I was nearly dazed by what I saw, I sat down by the window that overlooks the village and took, as it were, account of stock. It was beyond my wildest dreams of Holland, or any other place, that I should ever be mistress of a villa that held such treasures as this nest of ours. I must own to a feeling of supreme satisfaction that I could for once in my life, if only transiently, indulge all my pride of housewifery and revel, not only in an immaculate yellow-tiled kitchen below, supplied with quantities of porcelain and brass, but feast my eyes on the many pieces of fine old mahogany that made our large living-rooms look like copperplates of old Dutch interiors. And all this for fifty-five dollars a month.

Fancy sitting at a window that formed the entire side of the dining-room, its dimensions thirteen by sixteen feet, and a French casement at that! It looked to the village, and I preëmpted it at once by pinning a paper on it to that effect. I knew I should have no chance if James happened to secure it first. This pinning on of papers is a way we have of not interfering with each other's special "finds." I began to be glad that he had not taken the time to discover the beauties of the interior.

It would be idle to catalogue them. Doubtless they would be uninteresting to others; but the great mirrors in their carved frames, the mahogany wall-tables with fluted sliding doors, the ponderous desk of the same wood, the drawers inlaid with tiny round tiles of exquisite workmanship, the huge antique lamps of blue faïence, and of beaten brass, the carved cabinets, the old china, the thick rugs of unique design were treasured by me not only for their intrinsic worth, but for the delight they afforded my inner and outer eyes. Even the Dutch coalhod came in for a goodly share of admiration; for unlike other earthly scuttles it was shaped and glazed like a tortoise, low, ample, its broad curved back lending to the open fire in the living-room a look of Dutch solidity that, in all the animal kingdom, only a turtle can give. And there was an open fire! When I saw it one burden rolled from off my shoulders, and, barring the hot water, I should for that moment at least have seen everything through rose-colored spectacles.

But that Dutch kitchen! It was a subject for a Dutch painter of still-life. Only one thing about it troubled me: it was too still, too cool, too restful for the domestic eye. Everything harmonized. Except for a kind of wooden dais some eight feet square, which was covered with a fringed rug of royal red and placed against the farther wall, it was a symphony in white and yellow, from the tiled floor and yellow and white porcelain dishes, to the arched white ceiling and the cooking utensils of shining

brass that hung on the walls. Yet the vaunted "warm hearth" seemed to be wanting. I judged the temperature to be about that of a cold storage warehouse, and as I climbed the almost impossible kitchen flight in a mist formed by my own labored breathing, I perceived that mist of some kind is first rather than second nature in Holland. I felt this subterranean chill for several minutes after I sat down at my window to watch for James. It was to be his initial home-coming in Holland, and I wanted to be on hand to hug him on the installment plan just to give vent to my gratitude for *The Stork's Nest.*

As I watched the twilight deepen into dusk, below in the village a tiny light shone out here and there from street or alley. I opened the great casement. There was no wind; only a rush of soft air as from a deep breathing of the great North Sea. Now and then there was mingled with it the odor of burning turf from the chimney pots of the peasants' huts beneath me. I heard the *clipper-clapper-clip* of innumerable wooden shoes on the brick pavements. The voices of children rose shrill in their play. Some belated, home-coming rooks, cawing loudly, flew low over the darkening roofs towards the Scheveningen woods. Then, somewhere near me, clear, sweet, high, a bell rang the Angelus.

CHAPTER III

WHOLLY DOMESTIC

NEVER, never shall I forget James's first Dutch home-coming! It can be summed up in six words: it was so like a man. An *urbaine*, piled high with our baggage, stopped at the gate in the holly hedge. I was there to welcome the occupant, who seemed loath to leave the vehicle.

"Oh, James, it's perfect!" I cried, thrusting an arm in at the window to give him a preliminary pat on the back. He could not respond as his arms were full; so, too, was the extra seat; so, likewise, the floor.

"Let me help. Whatever have you got in here?"

"Now, one at a time, my dear girl," said James, working his way out rather laboriously; "I knew we'd need provisioning for to-night and to-morrow. Here, lend a hand, and take what's on the seat. I'll go in with these."

In the pride of his knowledge that he was providing for his family, he led the way into the house where we deposited the mysterious packages on the dining-room table. I left him to wrestle with the trunks, and made it my business to open the bundles large and small. If I make the statement that there were, in all, fully two

yards of various kinds of sausage, including Bologna and *leberwürst*, I do not exaggerate. James is nothing if not generous. In addition, there were two loaves of bread, a meter each in length, two boxes of Russian caviare, one small keg of *sauerkraut*, six bottles of Pilsener beer, one full moon of a Dutch cheese, in weight about ten pounds, one bag of unground coffee, two boxes of cigars, and two pounds of *hopjes* — a kind of black, burnt, butter-scotch candy made in The Hague and peculiar to it.

Now I leave this list for a study, with but one questioning commentary, to any disinterested or interested appreciator of certain masculine tendencies: Wasn't it just like a man? Poor fellow, he had done his best, and I could not find it in my heart to tell him other than if he had been intending to provide hospitably for a "stag supper," he could not have done better. He looked doubtful over my compliment, but his doubts did not affect his appetite.

It would be far easier to omit the chronicles of our struggles for the next ten days in our efforts to establish our housekeeping on a firm basis, that is, on the basis of food and fuel; but the omission would not leave enough to the imagination. It was in fact the maximum of effort and the minimum of result, and no imagination could do justice to the reality. Those who know Holland without, the artistic allurements of its unique waterways, the fascination of its moated cities, the quaint charm of its islands and fishing hamlets, know but the lesser half. To know it from within is to take the *deus*

ex machinâ by the hand, and make such intimate acquaintance with a life so foreign to ours, that the ways of Paris, Berlin, Munich, and Florence are as our next door neighbors' in comparison.

For several nights we took turns in sitting up with the stoves, or *kachels*. "Kachel-wakes" James dubbed them. A Dutch stove is the smallest iron object I know that can generate the most heat on the least quantity of coke, and sulk the longest before it is willing to do it. Moreover, it needs constant companionship—human, as a matter of course. Lacking this, it has a curious way of disappointing one's expectations. We had frequent consultations on this subject and many experiences with the subject matter. The relation of one of them will suffice.

I had been coaxing the fire in the kitchen stove and had re-made it three times before it so much as blinked at me. I appeal to any of my own countrywomen, who are housekeepers and appreciate a good range, to put themselves for a quarter of an hour in sympathy with me and my struggles. How would it seem to you to find a firebox four inches deep and four inches square at the bottom, hidden under the one cooking hole of a range four or five feet long and proportionately high? How would you feel, with an abnormally healthy family, consisting of a husband, famishing above you, to attempt of a cool, damp, dark, winter morning to build a fire in such an ark with a few dainty pieces of wood the size of chopsticks, and a something that resembles a twisted stick of molasses

candy? There are a few things which can be left to the woman's imagination; a man's cannot compass them. Such an experience is one of them. I had insisted upon making the kitchen fire myself. I knew James would have no patience, and fret himself into a fever over it. I told him to attend to the stove in the living-room.

In my discouragement I went upstairs to warm myself and find comfort with my companion in discomfort who, by the noise, was evidently having his Waterloo with the other *kachels*. James was looking almost desperate, as well as wholly mad; I use the word advisedly.

"What's the matter, James? Won't it go?" I asked with real sympathy.

"Go, no! I believe the thing is playing possum. I got sight of a live coal ten minutes ago, but it's gone back on me." He poked, and shook, and rattled until I thought the little *kachel* would be driven off its legs. I sat round and looked on, now and then, only, venturing a suggestion.

"Let me try, perhaps I can coax it," I said at last, kneeling beside him. "Here, give me the poker."

"Poker! You call that straight twelve-inch rod a poker! Great Scott! I wish I had a blast-furnace stoker —"

"Now, James," I said in my quietest tone that is apt to exasperate him when he is out of sorts, "let's look at the thing scientifically."

"Science be hanged, Persis. Can't you see for yourself that a two-foot piece of iron no bigger than our kitchen stovepipe at home, and a grate opening no larger than a

penny-in-the-slot slit, can't warm a twenty by sixteen foot room and thirteen feet high into the bargain? You don't use common sense!" He shook the little black affair till it was nearly hoisted from its dachshund legs.

"Oh, don't, James! You'll upset the whole thing, and if a coal should fall on that rug I should have a fit."

"Don't complicate the situation just now, Persis, I beg of you." When James is sarcastic I know the limit of his patience has been reached. "I'm not going to be boycotted by a Dutch stove, not if I know it — What the d——!"

"James, James," I expostulated, "don't swear!"

"Why, the thing's alive! I believe you'd be the first one, Persis, to hire a graphophone to do some talking for you if you'd picked up a live coal—darn it!" He wrung his half-blistered finger; "I believe it's starting up."

It was. That is the way of a Dutch stove. When one has reached the verge of desperation in consequence of its non-action, it begins to draw with a vehemence that in a short time puts all other nations' stoves to shame. Within ten minutes we were removing ourselves to a respectful distance from the glowing iron. In another ten we opened the windows for air. In the end we had to let the fire go out in order to cool off by bedtime. Not until two weeks later did we learn, and that by chance only, that the stove could be literally disembowelled: its inside lifted out by means of an iron handle like that of a kettle, and the piece of "stovepipe" as James called it,

taken down into the fuel room, emptied by a single turn of one's hand, refilled, lighted, and carried back upstairs to be set, briskly burning, within its glazed and perforated shell. No noise, no dust, no confusion, no smell of burning resin-sticks, no smoke of turf, nothing to offend either eye, nose, or ear.

Our fuel room was a mere closet, and the coal bin about the size of a travelling saleman's sample trunk. This room is universally small in Dutch houses; the coal and coke are bought by the bag and from week to week. The minimum of heat, the maximum of discomfort, that is the rule. The kindlings, so-called "fire-makers," something I mistook at first for braided molasses stick-candy, are bought by the hundred. They are shavings dipped in resin and artistically doubled and twisted into something resembling a French bowknot. This confection is about three inches long; it is daintily tied with twine and delivered in pink paper bags.

When I contemplated the fact that I was mistress of a Dutch villa, the rooms of which were thirteen feet high in the walls and proportionately large in square contents, and then examined the "fire-makers," two of which are expected to start a Dutch fire, I felt the contrast to be so painful that I half lost my courage — half, I repeat, but never wholly. I had always a reviving sense that there was enough of a unique natural beauty at my very door, to compensate for the loss of a degree or two of courage in my housekeeping attempt.

I had but to open the gate in the ivy-covered fence at

the end of the garden, and there always before me stretched the wide waste of the dunes that showed like overlapping ranges of hills against the horizon: billows of sand forty to seventy feet high, stable only for an hour, a day, then driven by the winds into shifting contours ever new, ever strange as they encroach landwards. Above them hung low the ever-changing North Sea sky, at times pale blue flecked here and there by a high-flying rook, and beneath it the sea showed a still fainter blue, gleaming white with crisping foam and thousands of snowy gulls. Sometimes, but rarely and at sunset, the heavens flamed scarlet, the sea burned red, the dunes, wherever they were set with coarse hummock grass, lightened into phosphorescent yellow, the waves, in color like the lees of wine, rolled along the wet, shining sands where a lone tern sought for his food. And often, very often, for days and nights together during the dreary winter-time, sky and sea and dunes were gray in gray, blotted out wholly in dark, rolling mists that hid both the strand and the sea — that wild sea, the terror of the ancients, which seems to utter, in the deep, continuous, gasping moan of its waves, the lament of those lost souls who peopled the great winds in Dante's Vision of Hell.

This sound is awful. I use the word in its entire signification. James and I spoke of it often, as more and more frequently we sought in our walks the famous beach of Scheveningen. It is unlike any thing we have ever heard by other waters in the New World or the Old. It seems to make articulate in that continuous, breathless

moan, all the desperate pain and strife, national and individual, of the ages in which Holland has been struggling for an existence unlike that of any other nation. It interprets anew the savage despair of the centuries in which the land attempted to beat back the human tide of foreign legions, that rose higher and higher as the little archipelago raised its head from the all-embracing waters and came into historical prominence. It breathes the long-drawn breath of dogged determination with which, for eighty years, it closed in a life and death struggle with the Spaniard. We hear in it the hopeless wail of internecine war, and the agonizing cry of a nation's soul when the body politic was dismembered by a Frenchman's word. We hear in it, also, the overwhelming rush of its ever-threatening sea and the uneven flow of its lawless rivers that, to this day, bear destruction on their floods.

That awful sound, coming from within the dark, impenetrable mists, brought to us a muffled knell, as it were, from thousands of engulfed belfries, the drowned bells of which seem forever to be tolling for hundreds of sunken cities and villages, for entire devastated provinces, all of which lie to-day deep beneath the shifting bottom of the North Sea sands; and, alas! for the hundreds of thousands of brave souls that have found death beneath its merciless waves.

Overwhelmed, yet never overmastered! This was, is, and must remain the wonder of it all.

CHAPTER IV

THE DUTCH OAT

JAMES insists that *The Dutch Oat*, as he dubbed her, deserves a word of notice, if not of praise. At first I objected; but in the end I, too, felt she should be, according to Dutch custom of memorializing everything significant or insignificant, memorialized at least; immortality is not for such as she. She was the prefix to our servant question, and may serve as an exponent of certain matters of Dutch red tape and elucidate some customs in The Hague.

James' elation at his success in finding a home so exactly suited to our needs, was so great that he overreached himself and overdid me in attempting to provide further for us and lift all care from my shoulders. But the method he pursued to accomplish this end was peculiar. He started for The Hague in the forenoon, saying he would be at home for lunch in order to return with me and look for a servant. There was little to do in the few hours of his absence except to watch the fires, for everything was in fine order throughout the house and every detail for housekeeping provided for, even to the linen and silver. However, as the kitchen fire, whether watched or neglected, went out under my super-

vision on an average once in two hours, I found that time did not hang heavy on my hands. Half an hour or so after James' departure the front door bell began to ring, and continued to ring without intermissions of any account until his return.

It seems, as I learned afterwards, that his method of provisioning was as follows: during his walk into town, a matter of two miles, he hailed every vendor of anything he happened to pass, and, giving him his card, pointed significantly backwards to Scheveningen. Then with a smile (James really has a smile that is ingratiating with foreigners), a polite salute and a substantial "tip," he would walk on his way, rejoicing in his good work and ready to hail the next comer.

In consequence of this remarkable process, which he had evidently been inspired to evolve from his consciousness, I had the doubtful pleasure of interviewing in pantomime four butchers, two of whom I feared would come to blows at the gate, three bakers, two cokemen, two turfmen, one vegetable-man, two milkmen, two buttermen, one eggwoman and two eggmen, one window-washer, who came with a long truck, loaded with hook and ladders, buckets, poles and hose, and gave me a genuine fright, for I thought the house was on fire and the "hook and ladder" was on the spot to help extinguish it, one fishwife, one fruitman, one grocer, one broom-man, and, lastly, a vendor of soap and scouring sand!

Any of my countrywomen who read this list will, I am sure, offer me their heartfelt, if silent, sympathy. I had, it is true, added in the past twenty-four hours two words to my limited vocabulary, *beneden* and *boven* — four in all; but not one of them was applicable to a complicated situation, and not one could help me out. I dared not say *ja* to this host of solicitors for fear of unpleasant foreign complications on our part and queer doings on theirs. It terrified me to hear them vociferating without a single gesticulation at the gate, after interviewing me. I knew, of course, and through sad experience, that *beneden* and *boven* belonged to houses and not vegetables, although some of the latter grow beneath the ground and some above it. That was one gleam of hope, but it enlightened me only for a moment. No one could expect me to order a chicken or a roast of beef, which I really wanted, by repeating with dignity such a word as *Hollandschespoorwegmaatschappij*. I found that with French and German at my command, no one understood anything but Dutch.

After having in vain tried *poulet* and *Huhn* with my last butcher, I cast all dignity to the winds and actually crowed. Even that failed, for Dutch roosters do not crow in the Yankee dialect of *cock-a-doodle-doo*. I learned shortly afterwards, but not before I had registered another vow to learn enough Dutch to make all my common wants known, that I should have asked for a *kip!*

I fear James found me in no amiable mood.

The servant question — is the servant question even in Holland, and particularly in The Hague. In attacking it, I came up against a Dutch dyke and failed to make a breach. "Yes, you can have a servant the first of May, but not before. You must then engage her for three months at least. A good girl will only make an engagement for the year. But to engage one by the month, or the week — oh, no, impossible! It is not the custom in The Hague." In consequence of this custom we found the hiring of a servant bound about, not with red tape — nothing so pliable — but with cast-iron bands of custom that have endured for generations.

One curious touch of the profit system there is in connection with this question which may well be worth mention. If the employer pays any kind of bill on a running account, for example, a weekly or monthly grocer's, merchant's, doctor's, or fuel bill, the service of the house receives one per cent of the amount paid from the merchant who receives the money. This curious custom is regulated by law, and the servant holds the employer to the payment of so much, or so little, as one-half of a Dutch cent, which is less than a quarter of a cent American currency.

We advertised; we registered in service bureaus; we investigated "homes"; we stirred up butcher, baker, and milkman to interest themselves in our behalf, but in vain. Our butcher took pity on us and sent us a Scheveningen *werkvrouw*, a young, pretty woman, the

mother of eight children and "one at the breast." These women hire out only for the day. In my ignorance I asked her if I could find a woman who would stay nights.

"Oh, no, it is not the custom in Scheveningen." Would she as a favor remain with us on Sunday? "Oh, no, it is not the custom for Scheveningen women to hire out on Sundays." Would it be possible, if we could get a girl from Scheveningen to have her in costume, it was so pretty? This was, of course, intended for a compliment. "Oh, no, it is not the custom for girls from Scheveningen to wear their home dress; it is not fine enough." All this by means of an interpreter, be it understood.

But she came to us by the day, our *werkvrouw*, and, with the most laudable intention in the world, she did her best for a week to make the home uninhabitable for us. The house was clean when we went into it, that is, clean enough according to my ideas, and I pride myself on being a thorough New England housekeeper; but from our *werkvrouw's* proceedings I should have inferred that it was other than a human habitation. For one week everything was a-wash. Such scrubbing, and rubbing, and washing, and drubbing, such sousing and wringing out of cloths, such scouring, and polishing, and flooding, as James said, regular *squee-geeing*, as went on was enough to drive one distracted. It did drive James out of the house, and me to find refuge, as on a Robinson Crusoe's island, upon my royal dais in the kitchen, where I stood

and endeavored to whip an egg with an affair resembling the spiral of a bed spring. She bought soap and sand by the kilo, borax and soda by the half-dozen boxes. She came at nine and went at nine, and when she was not scouring the floors and partitions, she was beating the furniture, polishing the brass, or scouring the kettles. It was only on the Seventh Day that we rested. It is all immensely impressive at first, this grand parade of Dutch cleanliness, but to the clear-visioned American time shows it to be, in part, veneer.

At last we had an answer to our advertisement: a typical lower-middle-class Dutch woman of an uncertain age who addressed me in fairly fluent French! I found that she could express herself in four languages: her own, French, German, which she spoke better than French, and very imperfect English. She was willing to hire out as general help by the week. Hearing this, I thought there was a screw loose somewhere, but James said: "Take her by all means; it isn't once in a lifetime you can have a whole Berlitz School of Languages *beneden* in your kitchen. Make the most of your opportunities." I agreed.

She expressed herself as willing to do the whole work of the house provided the *werkvrouw* did all the hard outside drudgery. I agreed to this. She asked permission to change her black suit — which it is the custom for girls to wear in service — for a warmer house dress and a more comfortable one. To this, also, I agreed. She

informed me she would go into The Hague one afternoon in a week, and arrange to spend every alternate Sunday afternoon and evening away from the house. To this I agreed. She also made it plain to me that it was the custom in The Hague — oh, how I came to loathe that phrase! — for the employer to pay the fares in the tram to and from The Hague. I agreed. She further informed me with perfect composure that she was to receive a certain rate per cent for everything bought at the door which she should, acting for me, pay for in cash! I thought this was going a little too far, but I agreed, under inward protest. She stated that it was the custom in The Hague for a girl in service to receive from a dinner guest one gulden as a fee. Then I took my stand, and refused; but, oh, the weakness of men! James said, *sotto voce*, that he would supply the necessary amount out of his own pocket rather than have a guest insulted, but, as we were in Holland, we should conform — that was his word — to the customs of the Dutch, and I must not stand for that.

Thus, having come and seen and conquered, this Dutch servant entered into possession of the house. James' face when she made her appearance to wait at breakfast the next morning was a study. Our *Berlitz School*, as James called her at first, appeared in a Mother Hubbard wrapper of flaming scarlet flannel, none too clean, and announced with stolid satisfaction in a guttural bass:

"The oat is ready." She had informed me the evening before that she had come to us to perfect her English! This information I received after I had engaged her, and she at once set to work to perfect it as above. James said nothing, nor I either, because we knew we should laugh out loud in her face if we did.

"You eat the oat — and sugar?" No response from either of us.

"I serve the oat," she announced with satisfaction; and she served the oatmeal in her way, which was no way, and took her departure.

"I can't stand this Berlitz School," said James when he took his face out of his napkin; "I'll call her *The Dutch Oat* after this, and for heaven's sake, Persis, get that red portière off of her as soon as you can."

For the thirteen days she was with us the red flannel Mother Hubbard was unchanged except on Sunday. It seems that and the black suit were all her wardrobe. She never failed to announce our breakfast with the formula: "The oat is ready," and, in the end, James said it was a wonder he didn't neigh for answer. I helped to make the kitchen fire — unknown to James — for several mornings, and always superintended the upstairs stoves for the night. One evening we went to the opera, and, coming home late and seeing good fires abounding took it for granted that she had attended to them, as she had promised faithfully to do. In the morning I was awakened about eight by a light in my eyes.

As not by any possible chance is there any light of the sun in Holland at that early hour I opened them wide, fearing fire. There stood *The Dutch Oat* in her flaming flannel, and a candle in her hand. I stared at her.

"The stove is out," she announced stolidly, without a movement of a muscle of her face. I heard James snicker.

"Out? The fire?"

"Yaas. He will not burn."

"Make it then as quick as you can." I confess I was cross.

"He goes not. I have my pains with him."

James' head was under the bedclothes, and I heard him growling out the most unintelligible instructions.

"Well, go out of the room, and never come in so again without knocking."

"Als't U belieft." She fell back upon this Dutch sentence which one hears as a conclusion to everything, whether argument, favor, insult, entreaty, command, refusal, acquiescence, civil or uncivil answer, and went out.

"James, what are you doing?" The head of James' Dutch bed was at the footboard of mine, consequently I could see him when he dove under the quilt and gave an exasperated kick at finding this unwelcome presence in our room.

"Quoting Homer."

"Quoting Homer? For pity's sake, James, explain yourself."

"Explain! I was that mad to see the *Oat* come in here that I wanted to swear, and couldn't in any one of the four languages, for she knows them all; so I had nothing left but Homer. Anyway it has relieved the pressure; but, Persis, I tell you she must *go*. I won't stand it — all this nonsense about stoves; and you have done all the cooking yourself. I'll break up rather than see you slave over here in a Dutch kitchen that makes me fear pneumonia for you every time you go down into it; it has never been above forty-eight since we came into the house. Send her packing."

And I did. Mercifully a silk merchant, with whom I had some dealings, knew of our plight and sent us a clerk of his who, to make an extra gulden now and then, kept his eye open for good help for the first families. How James and I laughed when we heard that! In the course of a few days we were provided with a cook and general woman of the house, a second girl in the person of our *werkvrouw's* fifteen-year-old Trÿntje, a boy to come in for odd jobs, and our *werkvrouw* to help out once a week. With this establishment of four, our *Stork's Nest* began to seem like home, although we had expected to keep but one servant as we do in America. With the coming of dear little Trÿntje and Anna Engelina the domestic atmosphere of our Dutch *Stork's Nest* cleared once and for all, and peace brooded above its steep roof on which there never once alighted a solitary stork! But the rooks were fine company, those and the sparrows which Trÿntje

fed on the colder mornings when they came to the kitchen windows in flocks of hundreds.

The prosaic matters of our expenses may not be uninteresting to some. The wages of the regular house servants came to two dollars and eighty cents a week; the *werkvrouw* had a gulden, forty-one cents, for her day's work. The laundry was all done out of the house by a coöperative association, for a year's membership in which I paid five dollars. The whole linen for the house, including household and personal linen for both employers and servants, came to something like one dollar and seventy-five cents a week: this, of course, included everything, even to the starched clothes, in all, averaging one hundred pieces. If the servants do not send their personal linen with that of the family, the employer is obliged by law to pay to each at the rate of twenty-six gulden — about ten dollars and a half — a year for the same. The constant stream of fees, also, must be reckoned with when one is counting the cost of Dutch housekeeping. A boy brings a bundle from The Hague — a fee. A messenger leaves a package or a note — a fee. A conductor on the tram looks to see if he shall give you the extra change of a half cent; one hasn't the moral courage to refuse — a fee, of half a cent to be sure, but in time it, too, counts. A boy shows you the turn of a street — another fee. You have company to dinner — a fee for both cook and second girl. The *werkvrouw* helps to carry the ash can to the sidewalk — a good fee this time. All the cabmen are feed, the

porters and carriers. In this way it goes on *ad infinitum*, and, although the fees in themselves are trifling, the aggregate amount must be reckoned with in all Dutch housekeeping and living.

Provisions, meat and groceries, as well as fuel are dear. Eggs, and not fresh ones at that, for all the best are sent to England, average in the winter fifty cents a dozen; butter thirty-five cents a pound; milk and cream are good and not expensive, three cents a quart for the one and fifteen cents a pint for the other. Vegetables are delicious, abundant and, according to our rates, inexpensive. As a rule the fruits are of a poor quality, expensive, and scarce. I know of one day when there was not a banana in The Hague. Cereals are little known. Cheese is of the best, and as dear as with us. The poultry is poor in quality and wanting in substance. The mutton is wool-growing mutton, and, as the Dutch eat little of this meat, it is difficult to obtain even from the Court Butchers the right cuts or the right kind; it is all strong. One almost tastes the oily fibre of the wool. The rents are reasonable, but all furnishings are dear, except the woolen fabrics. This fact is easily accounted for when one considers that there are few manufactories in the Netherlands, but an immense quantity of wool is raised. All dress goods are expensive, but the fine Dutch linens are very reasonable. As for the luxuries, an ice is a parody on that article, the cakes, with one or two exceptions, caricatures on the genuine product, wines poor and too dear for the quality. Dutch

living to be good must be expensive, and the weekly bills foot up much the same as at home.

Taking all things into consideration, Holland's cities are not places of refuge for the poor in purse; perhaps that accounts, in part, for the lack of foreign colonies in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and The Hague.

CHAPTER V

HOLLAND WITHIN

OUR home was not far from the beautiful estate which more than three hundred years ago belonged to the famous Jacob Cats. He was a kind of rhyming Benjamin Franklin, from all I can learn about him, and his name has become an honored household word, beloved among the Dutch in much the same sense that Franklin's is among us. It is a synonym for homely wisdom, trenchant philosophy, shrewd diplomacy and intense patriotism. Part of this estate has been secured for the new Peace Conference Palace in The Hague.

James, after looking the ground over, was seized with the competing mania, and gave all his daylight hours — they were few enough — to that absorbing work of design. On this account, as my household was running smoothly, I found time to explore The Hague to my full satisfaction. It served to pass away the time; but four months of such pastime is sufficient. Naturally I speak as a foreigner, foreign to the land, its homes, its people, its customs. I can see only with a foreigner's eyes, can judge only from a foreigner's point of view. It may not be the right point from which to write upon another country than my own; yet it is one of necessity taken by many an open and right-

minded German, Frenchman, or Englishman who has written on our country, and from whom we have learned "to see ourselves as others see us" with, in many instances, much profit to ourselves. I am sure the Dutch are none too good to be viewed through the same liberal glasses of an American.

I write of the Netherlands neither to criticise nor compare; that would be both unwise and ignorantly narrow-minded. I desire only to place before those who find this land for many reasons interesting beyond others, certain phases of Dutch life which presented themselves to me during a residence of many months in the Netherlands.

From the very first, there was noticeable during the winter the absence of anything like joyousness abroad in the streets. The men were stolidly sober, the women neutrally quiet, the children placid, the dogs, and they are legion, barkless, the horses without a whinny. I never saw a dog chase a cat, neither did I see girls playing tag, nor good healthy boys tearing down the Old Scheveningen Road like so many steam fire-engines to the rescue. I accounted for this last fact after seeing the fire apparatus of The Hague. One day I noticed an inoffensive-looking concern, about as large as a small dump-cart, faring at a dog-trot pace along that famous avenue. It was manned by three men in brilliant scarlet and astonishing helmets. There was an insignificant engine, connected with this portion of a Dutch fire department, and the small hook

and ladder accompaniment could easily be put to shame by my window-washing truck with its ladders, buckets and poles. It was the saddest looking fire-engine I had ever seen, and there was not even one small boy to race and shout in its wake! I confess I had a homesick pang at the sight. But I put reason to work afterwards, and James said that, for once, I reasoned well and as follows: There is the minimum of heat in every house in The Hague; there must be fire to make heat; consequently, little heat, little fire; little fire, little water required to put it out. If water were needed there is enough on tap to extinguish Vesuvius in its recent eruption.

Shoals of school children used to pass me in the streets, marching sedately and stolidly two and two, the two little fingers linked, as the custom is with peasants who are betrothed, the master or mistress at the head. Often they broke forth into singing, but the singing was stolidly discordant, and the tune a legitimate heir of the Lutheran psalmody of the Reformed Church! I rarely heard a child laugh, or cry. The babies submitted to hardships that would have roused a baby of any other nationality to protest with the full vigor of his lungs. In the trams there is no genial give and take, and exchange of weather nonsense among acquaintances who chance to meet. The electrics, even, run almost noiselessly, so perfect is the roadbed and the adjustment of the wires.

Of an afternoon about four, in the dismal early dark of a Dutch winter, I liked to walk through the two or three

principal streets, all of them less than twenty feet in width, just for the sake of looking into the windows of the various cafés, which were only dimly lighted, and seeing the men and women take their material pleasures, as it seemed to me, with a kind of desperate sobriety. Sometimes I used to join them. James drew the line at these cafés and would not go in, declaring they were the "limit" and made him "club-sick." Of course I knew what he meant — I had experience of the feeling when I saw the fire-engine. But I enjoyed the fun; everybody was so abnormally solemn. Little lads in white linen caps, full, long, white duck trousers and white duck "sneaks," flitted noiselessly hither and thither, like great white moths, with trays of chocolate, tea, coffee, and plates of rich pastries, the Dutch *koeken* of many names.

The occupants of the café, seated on small uncomfortable stools or narrow-backed chairs, ate the cakes and sipped their chocolate or coffee with toy spoons, the like of which the Dutch have used for centuries, without the accompaniment of a smile, a merry word, or the sound of cheerful laughter. It was all so silent, so dull, so dim, that I found myself longing for the first time in my life to be going to an afternoon "tea" at home, where I could lose myself in a rising flood of be-flounced and be-chiffoned femininity, where my voice would be drowned in the flood-tide of shrill chat and laughter, and my eyes be dazzled with lights and flowers and sparkling glass and silver.

Even the cakes are historical and their making an organized industry. A Dutch friend told me that for two or three centuries certain cakes, monopolies of certain cities and towns, have been made from the same recipe. It is a point of honor for one city not to steal another city's specialty and sell it under another name. This same friend was kind enough to make a list of some of them that we might be on the lookout for these tidbits on our travels. Afterwards as we came to know not only Holland, but other portions of the Netherlands, we made a point of buying these *koeken* in the various cities. Thus in the course of time and travel we ate Haarlem *halletjes*, Utrecht *theerondjes*, Gouda *sprits* — or "spout-cakes" because the dough is dropped through a funnel — Rotterdamsche *peperkoeken*, Breda *ontbÿtkoek*, Arnhem *meisjes* — maids — and *hopjes* of The Hague, which are not cakes at all, but a kind of burnt butter-scotch candy. It seems a certain Baron Hop gave away this recipe fully three hundred years ago, and the faithful Dutch continue to serve this confection, without the suspicion of a change in ingredients, unto this very day to thousands of consumers. They are dear, too, like all else in The Hague, and the brown bits cost on an average a cent apiece.

I could read these women's lives from their slow movements, from their expressionless faces, from their rich jewels, from their fine clothes, from their deliberate consumption of the many cakes. The routine would be:

a breaking of fast, merely, at half-past nine, a short morning spent in a loose wrapper much affected by the Dutch, a certain care of their dogs, a hearty lunch at half-past twelve, a toilet for the street and shopping on the Noord Einde, chocolate at a café, a walk, at home again in time for dinner at half-past five, then preparation for the theatre or opera for which the bourgeoisie holds a season ticket. Home again at twelve — and the round begins with the next forenoon. I learned afterwards that I was not far wrong in my reading.

I rarely saw a woman on the street without a dog attachment, sometimes two. They drive with them, sit with them, walk with them. When the dog is not accompanied by his mistress, he is with a maid. When he is not with the maid, he is with a kind of "dog-governess." In any and all cases he is cared for, petted, and treated on the street, at least, with far more consideration than the woman herself. I add to this statement another: that not only the woman of the middle and higher classes leads about a dog by the string or, as it happens in most cases, is led about by him, but every man of her acquaintance follows the same custom. The consequence is that, whereas the dog as a beast of burden is in his place between the shafts of the peasant's cart, and does his work as an honored friend and helper of the family, the petted poodle of the middle and upper classes is a nuisance and pest in a city like The Hague. The Dutch need never pride themselves on the pro-

verbial municipal cleanliness so long as this custom obtains among a certain class.

The contrast between the rich and the poor is most marked in this capital. The handsome villas of the wealthy merchants of Rotterdam and Amsterdam have for their back-door neighbors, as it were, the poor fishermen's dwellings of Scheveningen. Everywhere there is beggary in the streets, and the evidence of great poverty as a contrast to the fine showing of carriages and horses, of women dressed in luxurious velvet and furs, of liveried footmen and coroneted coach doors. I have seen faces of men and women on the Old Scheveningen Road that will haunt me always, thin for want of food, drawn with care, haggard with the waste of consumption — a result of starving rations, and foul, crowded sleeping-rooms. Instead of the heavy wines, the solid meats, the rich pastries on the tables of the rich, you will find meat in the pot only once a week in the workingman's home; for the other days a bit of cheese, a cup of coffee, and the regulation dish of small nutty potatoes must suffice. This diet is repeated in nine families out of ten. A Scheveningen woman once told me that her husband was out fishing and would receive for the trip of eleven days six gulden, two dollars and forty-four cents! "It is so little," she said, with the unconscious pathos of the poor, "we can scarcely make both ends meet." There were five mouths to feed on that sum, and no prospect of steady work; there never is when one considers the

caprice of the North Sea, and the fact that the fishermen do not own the boats in which they sail.

This poverty is more noticeable in The Hague than in any other city of the Netherlands, because the great contrast between the dwellers in the court quarters, the abodes of the wealthy leisure and mercantile classes and the inhabitants of the adjacent village of Scheveningen is always in evidence. Not that this mendicancy in the streets and at private doors is a proof of neglect on the part of the Dutch of their poor and needy; far from it. On the contrary I know of no country where charities are so systematized and productive of so much good as in the Netherlands. All over the land there are municipal orphanages, and *hofjes*, which I shall describe in connection with Leyden, there are Oude Vrouwen and Oude Mannen houses and the Begÿnen Courts. These also must be counted in with the *Gates of the Netherlands*, for in most cases the entrance is through a narrow gateway in the middle of some long city or town block. They are small, but some of them are very beautiful. The keystone generally bears an inscription with date, or the lintel a carving.

James and I never willingly passed by one of these narrow portals. Sometimes the statue of a little St. Christopher enticed us over the threshold and into the inner court, whence we could generally hear the sound of singing children's voices. I am sure that many an orphan boy or girl has revelled in cakes for more than one day

through James' thought of his own boy. I know he could not enter one of these "little gates" without his hand finding his pocket. These unpretentious *Gates of the Netherlands* should never be passed by if a foreigner would know intimately and appreciate thoroughly a beautiful trait in Dutch character; for the Dutch not only feed and clothe their orphans, they *care* for them in a way that must be seen and felt to be understood.

In every town of importance, in every province, one may see, if he seek it, just such an interior as the illustration shows: little maids in black dresses and white caps industriously at work in surroundings that make for health, peace, and happiness. Some of these "courts" are called Begÿnen Courts, from the ancient sisterhood of St. Begga who lived some twelve hundred years ago. In almost any city of the Netherlands, if one look carefully along a row of ancient houses in the old part of the town, he will find one of these "little gates" through which one should enter, or he can hardly be said to know the inner life of the Low Countries.

The organized begging of the churches, parishes, brotherhoods, and committees for the support of these various communities is something as remarkable, in its way, as the land itself. We had been but a short time in *The Stork's Nest*, possibly a week, when various notices began to be left at the door by messengers to the effect that on such and such a day, so and so — an honorable head of a community or prominent man in a parish — would call

"HOLLAND WITHIN"

and solicit alms for such and such an object. As the announcements were in Dutch and my powers of translation not at that period of the first order, I paid little heed to any of them. Within two or three days, as I was looking out of the living-room window, I saw at my gate the astonishing spectacle of a footman in quasi-livery. He opened the door and preceded no less a person than an ambassador, or so it seemed to me, up the walk to my front door. The ambassador was dressed in a suit of the richest broadcloth. He wore a tall hat, black kid gloves, and carried a gold-headed cane in one hand and a silver salver in the other!

I answered the bell myself as the *werkvrouw* had gone out of an errand, and, after an unintelligible word from the footman, I was impressed by the grandeur of it all into saying *ja*. It seemed safer in the circumstances than the negative. Whereupon the man bowed low and withdrew, that is the only word that expresses his deliberate action. The ambassador came slowly up the walk and with dignified greeting held out to me his silver salver. There is an old saying I have heard at times: You could knock me down with a feather. In this instance it was applicable to me, for I was weak with the strain of the anomalous position, and I had but a *kwartje* in my pocket! In a flash I connected messenger, footman, ambassador, and plate with the neglected announcement, and perceived that I was expected to contribute to charity on account of that unguarded *ja*. I dropped my

kwartje mechanically upon the pile of silver in the plate, and received a stiff bow in acknowledgment. (I could but wonder should I have had a smile if I had contributed a *rÿksdaalder?*) Then the ambassador also withdrew, his dignity quite equalling the footman's.

"And you mean to say that you had the face after all that parade to give him only ten cents? Why, the show was worth fifty!" was James' comment when I described this method of systematized begging. This "show" continued throughout the winter, and I soon learned to drop my ten cents into the plate without a sign of flinching or a feeling of weakness. Even a dear Dutch Salvation Army lassie was announced!

The common mendicants at the door were legion; the men without work numberless; the vendors of small wares, both men and women, who brought with them testimonials as to character and "hard luck," more than I could count. This beggary, wholesale and retail, went on daily, sometimes hour by hour, until the spring, when, with the return of the tardy sunshine and warmer weather, the numbers perceptibly diminished. At first I used to leave the hangings at the dining-room windows undrawn of an evening; but I soon drew them close, for it was not reassuring to see a wild, appealing face pressed against the great panes with the dark night as a background. Matters are carried thus far, and too far, in the rich capital of the Netherlands.

CHAPTER VI

AN HUMBLE SOURCE OF DUTCH ART

We began with the Poultry Show.

This may seem like an attempt to ridicule the sublime, but that is not my intention. James and I decided from the first to see the Netherlands, its life, its art — an expression of its life — its cities, towns, and waterways in our own way. We had long known our *Motley*, and *Henry Harvard*, *De Amicis*, *Hans Brinker*, *The Burgomaster's Wife*, *La Tulipe Noire*, and a half-dozen books of travel were continually on hand for reference or enjoyment. But the ways of others were not our ways. I realize that our manner of Dutch living and Dutch voyaging may not appeal to others, but it suited James and me. Ours was the synthetic, as opposed to the analytic method of other travellers and writers.

During our winter in The Hague we studied the centres of Dutch art in the Netherlands: the Rÿks Museum in Amsterdam, the Frans Hals Museum in Haarlem, the Mauritshuis and Mesdag at The Hague. We knew of old the wonderful series in the Dresden Gallery, the incomparable, if small, collection in Cassel, the rich showing in the English National Gallery, in Antwerp and Brussels. These, also, are centres, and the art of the

Netherlands is to be understood only when one has seen the works these centres possess, and verified their power of truth by residence and travel in the land itself.

As I said, we sought one of the humblest if most prolific sources: "*The Twentieth Great International Exhibition of Poultry*," under patronage of no less a personage than the Queen Mother.

"I know a fine bird when I see it," said James, looking up from his Dutch paper one morning in February, "and I've always wanted to test the truth of these Dutchmen's art, for some of their painted birds shake my faith in the limits of a Dutch artist's imagination. They seem impossible as to size and coloring. Let's go to the show."

"I, too, know a fine bird when I see it; but my point of view is the gastronomic one. There is certainly more than one 'out' in all the poultry that has come on our table. It is tasteless and colorless, and I'd like to see for myself. Some one told me not long ago that the poultry is fed on fish; that would account for its poor color and flavor — as if chickens needed phosphates!"

"A man told me the other day" (it's a peculiarity of James always to top my little stories with his big ones), "that every year fifty thousand hogs are fatted on the waste from the distilleries at Schiedam!"

"Oh, James! Is that why you vetoed pork chops the other day when I proposed them for a change?"

"Yes; it's bad enough for the men to make beasts of themselves with gin, but when it comes to feeding the

beasts themselves on the refuse, the government ought to interfere, or mankind draw the line."

"That only goes to show that our country isn't the only one that has its meat scandals."

"That's right, Persis, let the eagle scream till we've seen something at the show that will eclipse his glory and drown his voice."

"I don't care, James, if you do make fun of me. I'm patriotic to that extent that I can hug an American turkey gobbler if I am so fortunate as to find one at the show."

And I did! That is, I mean I saw him. I failed to embrace him because James interfered. I discovered him among several thousands of birds, not by his gobble but his label. When I saw it something began to lump higher and higher in my throat just as it does when I hear *The Star Spangled Banner*, or see its glory in a foreign land. James tried to laugh me out of it. "It's not an American bird, Persis, or he would have gobbled recognition. You've wasted your sentiments."

"He came over in an American egg, anyway, and if your patriotism were as deep-rooted as mine you would understand my feelings for this blessed bird." Whereupon my husband took me firmly by the arm and led me gently away to see black swans, and huge, insufferably supercilious Pomeranian geese and ganders. We inspected the several thousands of the feathered domestic tribe with ever-increasing interest. As James said: "It must be seen to be believed." The extreme brilliance of the colors was noticeable in the majority. They rivalled the Haar-

lem tulips which we saw later in the spring. The plumage was thick and exquisitely fine in texture. The size really abnormal.

There is a painting in the Mauritshuis by Jan Steen in which a cock standing by a little girl, who is seated on a step, seems preposterously large. I know now that it represents the actual. If, previously, Dutch art in poultry portraiture — it is nothing less than that — had explained something of Dutch life to us, now we were ready to acknowledge frankly that nature had enlightened art. We enjoyed the show, the finest, James said, of its kind in the world. We enjoyed more the light that it threw upon the innumerable canvases of feathered game, alive and dead, of waterfowl, geese, ducks, herons, of peacocks, partridges, pheasants and swans, of magpie, dove and finch with which Hondecoeter, Weenix, Steen, Mieris and Metsu have enriched the world.

Seek out these masters wherever they may be found, in the Rÿks at Amsterdam, at the Mauritshuis in The Hague, in the Antwerp Gallery, in Cassel, Dresden, London, and you will realize how they stand head and shoulders above the other schools in delicacy and richness of coloring, in the rendition of the downy depths of plumage or fur, in accuracy of proportion, and, above all, in perfect fidelity to the feathered life of the Netherlands.

An humble source, decried by many; but Art, like life, is apt to take frequent if not deep draughts at just such common wellsprings.

"Have you solved the problem of the table hen, now that you have seen the show?" James asked that evening at dinner, as he carved the breast of a particularly unapproachable fowl.

"Yes, I have; and to my satisfaction. I am convinced that every Dutch hen, rooster, and chicken outside the pale of that show is anæmic. It's a Dutch fad, this breeding magnificent birds for prizes, and has been for hundreds of years. As a result of this process the national and natural poultry life in the Netherlands has been drained of its best blood. The many have been impoverished for the few to that extent, that when you want a good bird for your table you have to buy a Brussels capon and pay seven gulden for it."

"Thank you," said James, meekly, but a little wickedly; "I'm glad to have the toughness and unpalatableness of this special bird so scientifically explained. It aids digestion."

"You are lucky to get that," I retorted. "Mejuffrouw Silz told me, the evening she dined with us, that the professional class has such hard work to keep up the appearances due their standing and make both ends meet, that when a friend is invited to dine a wooden chicken is placed on the table as a kind of *pièce de résistance*—and they eat bread and cheese! What do you think of that!"

"I think a man who can set before a friend a wooden chicken for dinner has a decided advantage over us in

the matter of *pièce de résistance;* this is the toughest fowl I ever tackled!"

He was a little cross, nor could I blame him. To come home from a poultry feast of the eye to a fowl famine on one's own table is not conducive to amiability, especially in a man. I had a wifely appreciation of the fact, and refrained from further speech and more stories. Somehow women's dinner-table stories always do fall flat.

CHAPTER VII

THE GATE BEAUTIFUL

If I found the birds and game of Hondecoeter and Weenix predominating at the poultry show, I discovered later in my Utrecht poulterer's shop the interiors of Metsu and the Van Mierises.

It is a small place on the Zee Straat in The Hague. The floor and walls are of stone. At the back there is a stone flight of stairs leading to the first story; beneath it is a stone archway with downward-curving stone steps vanishing in shadow. When I saw it for the first time it was filled with an assortment of wicker baskets and cages of different sizes and four different shapes. The colors were cool willow greens, warm browns and pale yellow. The stock—ducks, geese, turkeys, pheasants, cocks and hens, alive and dead, but with plumage intact, hares and rabbits,—lay in rows upon the counter, hung on the walls, and were suspended from the heavy beams of the ceiling. There was a finch in a tiny wooden cage at the entrance to the shop, and wicker crates of cocks, brilliant of plumage and shrill of note, cumbered the floor. Against the shadowed background of the deep, stone archway two wide-eyed fluffy owls in a huge cylindrical basket of wattle-work blinked slowly at their surroundings.

Again and again I found the subjects of these masters in the fish and poultry stalls of the market-places of North and South Holland. I met with them in the grocers' tiny shops; and everywhere I saw that these living pictures of to-day had preserved many characteristics — even to the shape and coloring of the wicker cages for the fowls — of those masterpieces with which Gabriel Metsu and Willem and Frans van Mieris have enriched the walls of the National Gallery in London, the galleries of Dresden and Cassel, of the Rÿks Museum at Amsterdam and the Mauritshuis at The Hague. It is a notable fact that these canvases have rejoiced already eight generations of an uncarping mankind by their truthful charm of coloring and execution.

The transition is easy from these interiors, filled with game and poultry, to the free haunts of the whole feathered and furry tribes, to forest, stream and river, to pastures, dunes, and peaceful countryside.

Through the Gate Beautiful of Dutch landscape painting we are led by five masters: Jan van Goyen, Jacob van Ruisdael, his pupil, Meindert Hobbema — greater than his master — by Albert Cuyp of Dordrecht and Jan Vermeer of Delft. These are the men who form the group of great landscape painters, and to know their canvases, wherever they are to be found, is to make acquaintance with an art that, noted for its fidelity to nature, often approaches the ideal and, in some instances, enhances truth through idealization. This idealizing

touch, rarely found in Dutch painting, illumines the truth of beauty.

Of these five masters three were prolific in works: Van Goyen, Ruisdael and Albert Cuyp. Their canvases may be seen in all the great galleries. The Rÿks at Amsterdam is notably rich in these landscapes as well as the Royal Gallery in Dresden. Of the other two, Meindert Hobbema has given us few canvases, but they are masterpieces and rarely beautiful — first-water gems, clear in conception, flawless in color. Head and shoulders above the other four, but side by side and shoulder to shoulder with Rembrandt and Nicholaes Maes, stands Jan Vermeer of Delft. I dare affirm this, and I believe that future judgment will confirm it. He has given to the world but one great landscape, or rather a town with a river frontage. This, however, is immortal: the wonderful *View of Delft* in the Mauritshuis at The Hague. That corner of Room VIII where it hangs was our Mecca on the occasion of every visit, and they were many, to that gallery. On dark days the sweet brilliancy of its coloring lighted all the gloom within the walls, and on the rare sunny ones, the clarity of its blue matched the patch of sky, as seen from the window beside it, that shows above the old, steep-pitched roofs of the Binnenhof buildings that border the Vÿver. This blue is entrancing: a blue the color of the Virgin's mantle in the great Raphael of the Dresden Gallery; the color of the Rhone at Geneva as it sweeps swift, deep, and strong beneath the bridge

by Rousseau's Island; the blue of Alpine gentians as seen beside a drift of snow on the heights of the Simplon.

O Jan Vermeer of Delft! Whence did you get this idealizing blue note that shows in all your precious works? From a mother's eyes? From the blue waters of the Schie? From the sky above the pointed towers of St. Catherine's Gate in your native town? Whencesoever you obtained it, it is, and must remain, the expression of an ideal elemental color of the universe.

We found it a matter of intense interest to study the early environment of these men, to note its effect on their art. Goyen of Leyden, Ruisdael of Haarlem, Hobbema, his pupil, near by at Amsterdam — all these knew and loved that with which they were familiar in their youth: the Haarlem woods, the Lake of Haarlem, the path between the bushes over the dunes to the sea. They knew the oaks and great forest trees of Haarlem, the waters and their mills, the cross-country of lovely lakes lying between Leyden and Amsterdam which James and I called afterwards, when we came to know it, *The Heart of Holland*. They knew, too, the ways of the sea, and the rivers and inland waters of the cities that border it. One and all knew these things, knew and loved them. Hence we find repeated again and again in their canvases with but slight variation the country peace, the forest road, the way across the dunes, the water-mills and the peasants' dwellings half-hidden by over-topping trees, the walls and towers of Delft and Dordrecht mirrored in the quiet waters.

In confirmation of this their attitude, on the side of art, towards their environment, one has only to seek out Hobbema's *Mill* and the *Haarlem Wood* in the Brussels Gallery, his two watermills in the Rÿks at Amsterdam and those in London. One has only to find Jacob van Ruisdael's country idyls: his *Lake of Haarlem* in Brussels, the series of landscapes at the Rÿks including the *View of Haarlem*, the *Forest Scene*, and *Landscape with Watermill*, together with that magnificent Dresden set, fourteen canvases unequalled by any collection on the continent.

In all of them there is to be found and felt the idealizing and uplifting influence of the Haarlem woods, a remnant of that vast wooded tract that once covered the coastlands, and is treasured with that other remnant, the *Haagsche Bosch* as the only forests worthy of the name in all the length and breadth of the Netherlands — these nether-lands where a solitary tree is hedged about with something of divinity, and it was once counted a high crime to wantonly destroy one.

Let anyone examine and study these five masters wherever he may find them on his travels, be it in the Rÿks at Amsterdam, in the National Gallery in London, in Brussels or Antwerp, but above all in Dresden, and he will be forced to admit that there is idealism among the old Dutch masters, and that these great landscape painters are its exponents.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MILLER'S SON

THERE is in the Rÿks Museum at Amsterdam the portrait of a warrior seen full face. Tradition says it is the face of Harmen Gerritszoon van Rÿn, a miller of Leyden and the father of a certain Rembrandt of whom in this tercentenary of his birth all the world is speaking, and to his honor. It is only a tradition, but I like to think it true; for the face is so fine, yet so strong, the eyes kind but keenly alivé to the world of affairs, their outlook level upon men and things — a face worthy to be placed beside the Rembrandt in the National Gallery in London. This picture in the Rÿks is an ancient copy; the original is in England.

During the winter we used to run up to Amsterdam for an hour or two in the Rÿks. We never remained long enough to weary ourselves and dull impressions through satiety. This portrait, wrongly signed: *Rembrandt, f.* 1641, claimed my interest from the first and continued to hold it. I had been so fortunate as to see all the Rembrandts on exhibition in the famous galleries of Europe, and thought I could see nothing in Amsterdam and The Hague — apart from *The Night Watch* and *The Lesson in Anatomy*—which could equal the unrivalled series in

"THE MILLER OF LEYDEN"

Cassel and Dresden. But there are two, and one a copy in the Rÿks, which, now that I have seen them, I find stand to me as exemplars, perhaps better, an expression, of the man Rembrandt and of his art. This portrait copy is one of the two.

The more I studied it, the more convinced I became that the miller of Leyden was the model for this portrait painted when his son was in the glorious first prime of thirty-five. I used to return to the Mauritshuis in The Hague after one of these visits to Amsterdam and look at the portrait of his mother. Little by little, as I studied it, with a photograph of the supposed miller of Leyden before me, I seemed to evolve a definite composite from the two. It was a mingling of feature, a blending of traits, both elusive, a combining of a common heritage of kindly expression about mouth and eyes. It was the face of Rembrandt *himself*, not the face of the old man in the English National Gallery, nor yet the joyous Rembrandt with his wife Saske on his knee in the Dresden collection; neither was it the gay youth, nor the thoughtful, middle-aged man in the gallery at Cassel. It was a composite of the many Rembrandts we find in all the famous collections of his works.

That he was a miller's son, this we know. With this fact in mind let anyone, if he have opportunity, enter one of the huge windmills for the grinding of grain in any province of the Netherlands. Let him note the effect of

the light striking into the dim, high interior from the wide doorway. Notice the shaft of sunshine which, entering by some narrow aperture high up near the second story, falls athwart the curious half-light and renders the atmosphere, charged with flour-dust, luminous. The light is intensified itself by the narrow opening, and intensifies the illumined shadow on beam and rafter. Let him mount the long ladder to the second story, and as he descends, notice the luminosity of the interior as seen from above. He will, seeing this, realize for the first time, that an impressionable small boy, a miller's son, some three hundred years ago, with an artist-soul just ready to germinate within him, must have been much in his father's mill, and the sensitive brain-films have unconsciously received impressions of light and its properties which were developed later in his art with such an intense power of permanence, that we of to-day can but marvel.

The truth of this was brought home to me one day as I stood within the great, dim interior of a grain mill on one of the islands of Zeeland. I saw about me, almost it seemed to me clairvoyantly for the moment, an early source of Rembrandt's psychology of light; for it is that. Other artists deal with its physiology; Rembrandt *alone* with the soul of it. Therein lies his apartness.

If subjectively he appeals to us, he does so by his interpretation of something that we can only express as the *animus* of elemental light. There are two or three

canvases by Rembrandt upon which I can never look without recalling the grandest word in all literature: *Let there be light; and there was light.*

One of these paintings which shows the power of light in its creation is a small canvas in the Rÿks Museum. It is called *The Stone Bridge;* many might pass it by. The work must appeal subjectively, or not at all. It is not the stone bridge, nor is it the landscape, nor the storm cloud, nor the threatened burst of sunshine through it that holds me; it is the illumined whole which shows that some elemental power is obeying a universal law in this transmission and transfusion of light.

The miller of Leyden, as seen in the accompanying illustration, his mill, the duplicate of which may be found now, after three hundred years, in certain parts of Holland, and Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rÿn, the miller's son, form a trinity the factors of which elucidate one another.

James and I, exploring at our leisure various cities and towns, came upon another source of inspiration for this master-painter. As a consequence of this "find" we understood and appreciated for the first time the beauty of the misnamed *Night Watch.*

All over the Netherlands, if you look for them, you will find the remnants of the *Shutterhofs*, or shooting courts, the old *Doelen*, or ancient shooting galleries, which were to the militia, or train-bands of old, what our regiment armories are to our own home defenders. But you must look for them. They are not always to be found for

the asking. We happened upon the remnants of one in Dordrecht; and if Rembrandt himself with Lieutenant Willem van Ruytenburg of *The Night Watch* had appeared before us in the dark entrance, it would have been no cause for wonder.

A narrow stone passage-way between two old houses in a city block led into a court set with magnificent trees. I had only a glimpse of this, for workmen were busy tearing down and carrying away the beams of an old *Doelen*. We made our way into the passage among the débris, and stood there for a moment to look at the brilliant sunlight which, flooding the court and sifting through the young spring foliage of the great trees, filled the farther end of the dark, narrow stone passage with the golden light of the famous *Night Watch*.

We found Rembrandt again and again, but afterwards in the glorious spring of the Netherlands, when we saw Amsterdam for the first time, that is, *really* saw it. We found him in old auction-rooms, dark, piled high with treasures from old houses and families. Jew and Gentile were seated on both sides of the long table, which was loaded with old silver, old inlaid woods, sparkling with cut glass and gay with cross-stitch embroideries and the riff-raff of households that once were noted for their rich furnishings. A broad band of semi-light fell through the not overclean side window and struck into prominence a Scheveningen woman's white fluted cap and shining gold band and cap pins. It lighted the dark faces of

three Dutch Jews. One was holding aloft a fine glass tankard and testing it with the nail of his crooked, coarse-knuckled little finger for a flaw. It paled the light of a pipe that a fisherman was blowing into smoke.

We found him in the library of The Hague — and so close to us that it brought his personality as if living before us.

We were looking over a folio of his sketches and drawings, those moods and tenses of the very man caught off his guard. These are reproductions from private and public collections, and most interesting to study. They furnish the best insight into Rembrandt's way, not only of looking at a thing, but seeing it. Of all these the one that brought the master nearest to me is a slight sketch of a mighty tower in ruins. It stands among much fallen débris. The tower itself, what there is left of it, shows its massive and perfect proportions even in its fallen estate. Of foreground or background there is only a hint suggested by a few masterly and solid strokes. One realizes that here is no tower that has been besieged by Time, but one upon which has fallen some sudden catastrophe. In the upper right-hand corner scrawled in obliquely, but boldly, one reads: *Tower of Town House Amsterdam after the fire taken from the City Scales.*

Then I saw the master with fit subject for his mighty brush: the great tower of the Stadhuis in smoking ruins, the play of smouldering fires about it, the wreathing of smoke around it, the sudden flash of a spurting flame,

the wondrous light upon the smoke-haze that covered the sky. And just across the Oude Zÿds Voorburgwal by the city scales (why not Weigh House?), Rembrandt van Rÿn catching the effect of ruined tower, flame, smoke and wondrous reflected light, with a few black strokes. Oh, great Master! How like your own life! One seeks in vain for a remnant of that old Stadhuis Tower — and in vain one seeks for your forgotten grave; but the Tower survives in the master's sketch, and Rembrandt in the art that towers above all others of its kind.

So the winter passed, with now and then a day at some one of the three great galleries of the Netherlands. We went up to Haarlem to make acquaintance with Frans Hals in his own home. His are the only guild, or corporation pieces, I felt willing to look at, barring Rembrandt's; for the vanity of the Dutch is never more in evidence than in memorializing their civic honors by having their portraits painted by the wholesale. No one doubts but that they were all good men—some of them very good-looking ones—and the best of citizens, but as James said, the line must be drawn somewhere; and when it comes to the Lady Regents of an Asylum for the Insane, the Overseers of a Lepers' Hospital, a Tailors' Trust Company Limited, a Cloth Merchants' Syndicate, or a Poorhouse Commission, as well as thousands of lesser lights, all standing, sitting, kneeling, posing for their portraits, the limit of forbearance with this peculiar weakness of the

Dutch has been reached. And to think that they should have employed such men as Rembrandt van Rÿn and Frans Hals to paint them at so much a head! I am sure there were plenty of others to do it for them.

It has been well said that corporations have no soul, and the saying is exemplified in the general expression of these hundreds, yes, thousands of citizens' faces. As a matter of principle we turned our backs on all the corporation pictures, or, at least, cut their acquaintance whenever we could without injuring the feelings of a proud curator of a museum, or stadhuis, in some of the smaller towns. I drew another line at the numberless *Flights into Egypt* and the *Susanna-in-the-Baths*. Just why every old master should try his hand on these two subjects passes my comprehension. Of course I have a theory — which anyone is privileged to have — that one subject gave the artist a good chance at landscape if that were in his line, with the aureole of a religious touch, and the other satisfied both morality and art by combining chastity with nudity. James has confirmed the reasonableness of my theory.

There is too much servility in this admiration for Art, and it is costing both individuality in opinion and truthfulness in expressing a conviction. If I don't like Rembrandt's *Susanna in the Bath* why should I pretend to admire it, or be looked at askance if I express my non-admiration, even if it be by an old master? Masters are all human, and their works uneven. Were

not this the case we should have, not the true masterpieces which are an expression of the vitality of genius at the flood, but a dead level of mediocrity. Well that genius like all else has its ebb tides, its lapses into the commonplace! We are the richer for it.

But Frans Hals and Company in the old Stadhuis of Haarlem are not to be ignored. It is a veritable reception of Haarlem dignities who receive you with all due proprieties. I would like much to introduce into this one room, given over to regent and guild pictures, *The Jolly Toper* and the *Lute-player* from the Rÿks, *The Haarlem Fishwife, Hille Bobbe, At her Fish-stand*, from the Dresden Gallery, the "*Pickel-häring*" so called — a laughing man, a toper, holding a pitcher in his left hand — from Cassel, and *The Two Musical Boys* from the same collection. As James said, "It would make things lively in the old Stadhuis and show us Frans Hals other than the one who worked for so much a portrait." Yet this room in the Stadhuis on The Groote Markt is a noble monument to a noble art and one of Haarlem's artist citizens. One should go there if only to make acquaintance with Frans Hals and Company at home.

Rembrandt van Rÿn lives not alone in his works but in those of "all the glorious company of the apostles." There is Vermeer of Delft who, I like to think, can trace his power through Karel Fabritius, a pupil of Rembrandt and master for a short time of Jan Vermeer, in a line of

direct succession from the great master. But this is almost wholly imaginative on my part, and Vermeer of Delft, with some forty works not yet all discovered, eludes cataloguing except as a great Dutch master, perhaps the greatest after Rembrandt. His *View of Delft* and *Head of a Girl* in the Mauritshuis, *The Man with the Hat* at Brussels, and *The Lesson* in the National Gallery in London show the greatness of his genius, and place him at this late date where he has always belonged, "at the head of the glorious company."

We went over to Brussels just to see a painting by Dordrecht's most renowned son in art, Nicholaes Maes, *The Dreamer*. I have sat before it for a half-hour at a time marvelling at the power of human appeal in that painting. An old woman, worn with life and the toil and sorrow and pain of it, has fallen asleep in her chair. Her spectacles are slipping from the tired fingers. There is a slight flush on her wrinkled cheeks. She is dreaming — dreaming of young joys that have been, that never will be hers again. There is a touch of vivid red in the picture, and this touch will be found in nearly all of Maes' paintings, just as the wonderful blue note is found in Vermeer's, and the golden brown, that shadows black, in Rembrandt's.

Maes is the one of the old Dutch masters who always appeals subjectively, who idealizes and spiritualizes his subject without departing from the truth of the real. He, too, was a pupil of Rembrandt, but never an imitator.

He is the great forerunner of Israëls and Maris. You find humanity in *The Dreamer* and in *Asking a Blessing* — an old woman at her humble table murmuring the one prayer: *Give us this day our daily bread.* We find in the Rÿks an *Old Woman Spinning*, a girl at an open window: *Dreaming* (there is the touch of red in the shutter), and in Dresden, *Two Women in a Kitchen Cleaning Pewter Plates.* Here you find the predecessor of the best in the modern Dutch School.

Of the others of that company, of Jan Steen, whose grave we found in St. Peter's at Leyden, and his merry family-life, of Dou's candle-worship, of Van Ostade's peasant gatherings, of Bol's portraits, first cousins to those of Frans Hals, of Pieter de Hoogh's charming interiors — an old-time Anton Mauve — why write a word? They may all be seen to-day in living pictures throughout the length and breadth of the Netherlands, *if one seek for them.* If I were asked what gallery would be the best field for studying Dutch art, I should answer unhesitatingly, the Dresden. It has over seven hundred masterpieces of the Dutch School. It possesses these treasures by the wholesale: nineteen of Rembrandt's best; fourteen of Jacob van Ruisdael's incomparable landscapes, sixteen from the brush of Gerard Dou and from the other masters in like proportion. To collate, to compare, to learn, one should study in the Dutch School on the Elbe.

A recent writer on Dutch art has made a statement to

the effect that the florescence of that seventeenth century of Dutch painting cannot be satisfactorily accounted for. Dare I attempt it after seeing the widespread examples of the best in Dutch art? If I may, I would suggest that art, and a very wonderful art, existed in the Netherlands in the preceding century; but the terrible struggle for independence did not allow it to come to the surface to breathe. Still, it was at work, leavening, after the destruction wrought by the Iconoclasts, the whole public mind to receive what was in store for the next glorious hundred years, when peace permitted the graces of life to show themselves again. Let anyone examine the works of Scorel and Moreelse, and he will understand how the way was prepared for those more fortunate painters of Rembrandt's generation. They are masters, and great ones, worthy to hand on the torch to no less a person than Rembrandt van Rÿn. It was no sudden florescence, that seventeenth century in Dutch art; it was only the fruition from the florescence of the preceding hundred years, visible at last in the market-place, if nevermore in the Church.

"Tell me," said James, one day in the train as we were coming home from a trip to Amsterdam, "what six Rembrandts are your favorites."

"*The Stone Bridge*," I answered promptly, "and my *Miller of Leyden*, and, don't laugh, *Ganymede and the Eagle* in Dresden, and that picture of himself with his wife Saske on his knee, and the portrait of the writing-

master Coppenol, and that splendid young Nicholaes Bruynink in Cassel —"

"Hold on; that's six."

"Give me one, two more?"

"Yes."

"— And the old Rembrandt in the National Gallery, and the young Rembrandt in Cassel. Now what's your favorite?"

"You mean one, or six?"

"Just one solitary one."

"Of Rembrandt's?"

"No; just your only one in the whole world." James was silent a moment, and looked out of the carriage window. It was a dreary outlook: dark gray clouds rolling overhead, a really wintry sky, and the monotonous stretch of uninhabited land on either side of the Sloterdyke.

"Israëls' *Alone in the World*," he said.

I made no comment, for I knew his thought: that picture belongs to no age, no country; it is the property of the world, and its prototype may be found in palace and hovel. In a peculiar and narrower sense it belongs to Scheveningen, which deserves a word by itself.

CHAPTER IX

SCHEVENINGEN

A RECENT English writer on Holland says: "Scheveningen is half squalid town, half monstrous pleasure resort."

Such a statement merely proves that this small portion of the world can be seen through other eyes than mine, and many others. I can readily understand how the last half of the statement can be true, viewed through a summer tourist's ephemeral glasses. To speak of Scheveningen to a friend or acquaintance is to call forth the ready response: "Oh, yes, I know Scheveningen. We ran down there from The Hague and saw the beach covered with those *beehive* chairs. It is a curious sight. The illumination at night is fine, and the music of the best; but otherwise it must be deadly dull."

This is the Scheveningen that the world in general knows. But there is another that James and I know — the Scheveningen that has been the inspiration of Mesdag and Maris, of Israëls and Blommers, Artz and Bosboom, and of many an artist of lesser fame. This is the Scheveningen that bars out the intrusive stranger and foreigner by its own high dykes of custom, reserve and sturdy independence; that refuses to be patronized, and shows

its very heart, finely and appealingly human, only when it realizes that the stranger, or foreigner, approaches it with human sympathy apart from idle curiosity. This is the Scheveningen I would like to make known to others, this fishing-village I both know and love.

Perhaps there is no better introduction to Scheveningen, its life, its people, its joys and sorrows, its narrow closes and tiny courts, than through the medium of the Mesdag Museum on the patrician Laan van Meerdervoort. It has been opened for nearly three years. It is the gift of Hendrik Willem Mesdag, the artist interpreter of the Scheveningen strand and the North Sea in all its moods. This private collection, unequalled, it is stated on the authority of Zilcken, in Europe or out of it, has been made a gift to the state by its owner. It is a noble gift from a noble donor who wisely enjoys the usufruct of his labor in that he shares his joy of possession with all who choose to cross his threshold. The rooms connect with his own living rooms, the building for the museum having been erected on the garden.

When one counts on the walls the number of paintings portraying the fisher life of Scheveningen, one realizes that without this unique fishing-village, an humble neighbor of the rich capital of the Netherlands, there would in all probability never have been a Mesdag Museum. It seems that Mesdag, born in Groningen, after a business life of many years, devoted himself entirely to painting

and collecting the masterpieces of other artists. From youth up he had given his leisure to drawing and sketching, but in middle age the call came loud and clear. He worked in 1866 in Brussels with his friend Alma-Tadema and with Roelofs. The summer of 1868 he passed at Norderney. There by the sea he "found himself," as the Germans express it. From thenceforth he knew in what direction his calling lay, and, having made his home at The Hague in the immediate vicinity of Scheveningen, he became with the years the finest interpreter of the capricious North Sea and the life of its famous strand.

On the walls of the Mesdag Museum we find this beach drifted white with snow; near the village a great fishing boat, or *pink*, is shored with stakes. The men are warming tar over a fire to calk the ship. We find there the North Sea calm beneath a summer moonlight, the *pinken* seeming almost to rise and fall on its long swell. These two, among many, are Mesdag's finest. We see a wreck driving like a haunted thing on tempestuous seas. We find the soft dusk of evening; a few boats are drawn up on the strand, their hulls showing dark against the clear heavens. We find, in fact, the North Sea of Heinrich Heine, who alone has been able to paint it in words:

Starless and cold is the night,
The Sea yawns;

And over the Sea, flat on his paunch,
Lies the misshapen North Wind,
And secretly, with suppressed groanings,
Like a stubborn grumbler who would be good-humored,
He babbles into the waters
And relates his mad yarns.

. . . . . .

The Storm is raging,
And he lashes the waves,
And the waves, foaming with wrath and rearing,
Tower on high, and the white mountains of waters
Rock as if living.
And the little boat climbs them,
Laboring painfully,
And suddenly it plunges downwards
Into the black, wide-yawning abyss of the floods.

. . . . . .

The sun sank deeper, and threw
Glowing red beams upon the water,
And the white, broad waves
Urged by the tide
Broke in foam, ever nearer on-rushing —
A strange rustling, a whispering and whistling,
A laughing and murmuring, a sighing and sousing,
Intermingled with a crooning as of a cradle song at home.

Turn to Jacob Maris, brother of that Matthew who is more poet than painter. He, too, heard his clear call

in the Scheveningen fisher life, and we see here his masterpieces dealing with the intimate home life and labor of the people: the mussel fishers knee-deep in water with their carts, and a "wifie" sitting on the beach watching them. He shows us the interiors of the tiny homes, the closes, a Scheveningen woman sitting on the dunes and looking out to sea — waiting for whom?

Artz, too, felt the influence of this lowly life, and, like the others, after wandering to Paris, he returned to his own and "found himself" among the humble fisher folk. Blommers, also, and Sadée were stirred to work with this material. Even Israëls, the greatest Dutch master of the present, found the inspiration for one of his greatest, if not the greatest, of his works in the lonely dwellings by the sea. His *Alone in the World* in the Mesdag Museum is a masterpiece before which one stands only to feel, if he be human, a contraction of the heart. This is broad work, and there is little detail; but the humble room is a sanctuary: the shrine of a broken heart. On the rude peasant bed lies the wife, the face gray in death. Beside her sits her husband *alone in the world*. That is his thought; and Israëls has known with deep spiritual insight, supplemented by his genius, how to express that thought so perfectly, so humanly, that this touch of his brush shows us the whole brotherhood of man.

The Mesdag Museum is in a very real sense Scheveningen's apotheosis.

There are other canvases, fourteen by Anton Mauve, showing the inland peasant life, and many of the modern French School that would make the name of Mesdag famous as a collector alone: beautiful Corots, grand Daubignys and Rousseaus, exquisite Millets, seven by Diaz, and by the Italian Segantini two famous canvases, one of which, *The Two Mothers*, strikes the same chord in mountain life that Millet strikes on the plains of France, and Israëls on the North Sea shores.

Taken all in all, this museum represents more clearly and consecutively than any other the trend of modern art, its democratization — the finding and expressing subjectively of the Humanly Beautiful in the life of the toilers. Meunier among the sculptors has done this thing — all praise to him. When will a Dutch sculptor arise to do the same for his own people?

Having seen Scheveningen in art, it is well to verify the truth of this art by seeking the source of its inspiration. As the dunes are worn away little by little by the encroachment of the North Sea, so year by year this typical fisher life, that is lived behind and on them, loses something of its individuality. The encroaching flood of the New and the Progressive undermines it socially, and little by little the old life falls away. Even now the younger Scheveningen girls are beginning to neglect the charming costume of their mothers, and wear gowns and hats of twentieth century make. The streets are changing, and

"A TOILER OF THE SEA"

UNIV. OF MICH.

the great summer caravansary with its mushroom growth is closing in upon the little village that has hidden itself behind the dunes for protection against the ravages of the sea.

But the old Scheveningen is still to be found, only, like all else worth seeing in the Netherlands, one must seek for it. The Old Church, the fishermen's church, still stands at the end of Keizer Straat, a sentinel of the centuries, just behind the dunes. It is the only landmark that was left after the terrible inundation in the seventeenth century that swept the fishing hamlet out of existence. There is a break just here in the line of dunes that stretch from The Helder all along the coast of North and South Holland and save the land from being engulfed. By this break, the sea, until the building of the esplanade, a small dyke in reality and a comparatively recent structure, came up in times of high water as far as the spot where now stands the Promenade Hotel, a distance of a mile inland towards The Hague, and stood three feet deep beneath the trees of the Old Scheveningen Road.

Behind the dunes and below the lighthouse is the present village, one can hardly say "built," for the mass of tiny huddling houses seems to have burrowed into the unstable hills. They are hidden by them from most points of view, and the overtopping sands drift upon them and threaten the very roofs.

I used to stand at sunset on the dunes by the lighthouse

tower which signals across the chasm, where now is the valley of Keizer Straat, to the Old Church, and marvel at the teeming life hidden from sight before me — a life that lives and loves, that is married and gives in marriage, that rears its eight or ten children to a family, and toils to feed the many mouths from the sparse bounty of the capricious North Sea; that worships in the old church of its fathers with old-time simple faith, and obeys God's laws as best it can under the circumstances.

It was but a few steps across the dunes, set sparsely with coarse hummock grass, the roots of which hold down the shifting sand, to the abrupt edge of the sand-hill from which Scheveningen is best seen. Just here I could have stepped from the dunes upon the little red or black tiled roofs below. When I turned to look behind me I saw the waters of the fishers' havens, inner and outer, filled with black weather-beaten *pinken*, and beyond these, the sea of dunes, lonely, solemn, but not dreary, billowed far and away to the horizon and into the mists of sunset. Before me the old Scheveningen burrowed its red roofs into the sand-hills and spread irregularly down their sloping sides — a solid mass of brick and tiles with curious zigzag lines drawn in and through them which marked the lanes, alleys, closes, streets, *slops* and *laantjes* of the jumble of houses apparently tumbling downwards to Keizer Straat, and the foot of the old fishermen's church.

I liked to walk down Keizer Straat as far as the "slop," a long winding alley which an unheeding stranger would pass without a thought of what lies behind this mere crack between two houses, and, entering it, make my way along its narrow length — two may pass provided one stands to the wall — up through the "laantjes," or avenues in miniature, to West Straat. I lost my way the first time I attempted to penetrate the labyrinth. It was Sunday. The whole population, dressed in their Sunday best, filled the alleys and streets. They looked at me through their level unflinching lids as if they did not see me, and barely tolerated the presence of a stranger and a foreigner in their midst. In my confusion I turned to a woman who was leading two tiny pink and white girlies, hardly more than babies, one by each hand, and in my halting Dutch asked the way to Keizer Straat.

She examined me for a matter of ten seconds as if I "had come from the Boffins," with a look, not of mistrust, but as if I had been a poor worm which she was hesitating to crush beneath her foot. Then she said without a smile of encouragement or an inflection of voice, "Come with me;" and strode down the *laantje* at the Scheveningen woman's cart-pace, the two dear babies doing their best to emulate her. She spoke no further word. I realized she was undergoing a trial in my company and that the eyes of Scheveningen at that moment were upon us. The straight looks that were cast at the "stranger within their gates" were not wholly of disapproval, but

they seemed to goad the woman on to get me out of the sacred precincts as soon as possible. At the corner she stopped short and pointed to the *slop*. "Down there," and turned to go back. I thanked her and tried to press a small silver piece into her hand. Never shall I forget the superb air of toleration, the warding-off gesture with which she raised her hand and pushed mine and its money aside, not ungently, but firmly. "Not on Sunday," she said, still unbending; and I stood there rebuked, ashamed, and in my confusion bent to caress the children. Seeing this, she smiled and her whole attitude towards me changed. I asked their ages and where she lived. I thanked her, and bade her "Good-day" with the determination to do by her as I would do by any other lady who had shown me a favor.

One day, a few weeks later, I made my appearance again in the inner court circle of Scheveningen, armed with a bunch of fresh daffodils for my benefactress. I had to inquire the way to her home more than once, and the daffodils, as much strangers as I in the small desert of stone and brick where no flower blooms and no tree gives its shade, caused as many wondering and approving looks and expletives as my inquiries. In fact, half the community was "set by the ears" when they found I was taking Vrouw A. some flowers. It was a workaday atmosphere in which I moved. All the women and old men were at home; all the able-bodied men were on the sea, for the fishing-fleet had gone out two days before.

Every little close, not much larger than a city basement's front area, was smothered by a clothes-rack on which were stretched blue shirts and white, bed covers and the family wash. The women in their undress uniform — small close white cap like a nightcap, and minus frills, gold pins, aprons and many petticoats — were washing and rinsing in pewter tubs just outside their Dutch doors, over the lower closed half of which the rosy cheeked toddlers peeked at me. Some were bringing the water from the common pump in the middle of the *laantje*. Many of the huge fishwives in the full bloom of tousled hair, small white cap aloft, faces round and red, weather-seasoned hands and arms, their strength and proportions like men, followed me with arms akimbo and an unintelligible word of direction. But there was never a rudeness, only a kindly inflection of the voice and a showing of the generally toothless gums in a smile, when they knew my errand.

I found the little home at the bottom of a small close that was reached from a tiny square as big as a pantry, which square was connected with the street by a long winding passage — I think it was about three feet wide — formed by the walls, doors, and port-hole-windows of numberless other tiny houses. By that time every woman and old man on the route had shown me a friendly face. It was then that, metaphorically, Scheveningen extended to me the hand of fellowship and gave me the freedom of its narrow courts.

Afterwards it showed me its heart.

It was on the occasion of a later visit I was made welcome in the tiny houses. I was shown the rude wall-cupboard bed with the wooden doors that shut it from sight in the daytime. I was shown the shelf-cradle, or tiny bunk for the last baby, placed on the foot wall about a yard above the parental couch. I was shown with pride the simple blue and white tea-things on the table under the cotton-lace draped porthole. I was shown the microscopic grate for turf-burning and cooking that is placed in the three-foot square entrance and is used by two families in common in order to save fuel. They hive for warmth in winter, sleeping six, and many times eight, in the one small box of a garret. No room is larger than a good-sized closet or small storeroom. They are chilled through, although they are inured to all weathers, for want of proper heat when the searching northwest wind, driving in from the sea, finds them out in their cool, damp burrows. Their scourge is consumption, induced by the foul air of overcrowded sleeping-rooms and insufficient food of the right kind. They sleep at home. They live and work in the open, and their recreation is to don their best and gossip as they walk with that peculiar carriage, which is half swing, half roll, half stride, up and down the length of Keizer Straat from beyond the "slop" to the Old Church. They are poor, proud, sturdily independent —no beggars are among the Scheveningen folk — haughty almost in their carriage, which is noticeably fine, clannish,

intermarrying with their own, never eager to make acquaintance with strangers, and pursuing their calling of fish-catching and fish-selling with the conscious pride of professionals.

In winter or spring it is a common sight to see a *pink* drawn up by horses on the beach. It is moved as a house is, on rollers. You may see at such times the living pictures of Mesdag, of Maris, of Israëls, Artz, and Sadée. The dark battered hulls stand out from the gray sands against the gray rolling mists. The heavy *zwards*, or leeboards, are folded close against their sides like a wild duck's wings when it rests in the reeds. Two sailors, the whole crew, are sitting on the roller, smoking their pipes. A group of men farther down the strand are in the water beside their carts. They are raking over the mussels that the tide brings in by the half-ton. Rarely a woman is seen. She is either at home with the children, hawking fish in the streets, selling it in the stalls of the market place beneath the protection of the Groote Kerk in The Hague, or working by the day, like our *werkvrouw*, to eke out the scanty living.

Such is the life of these people among whom the greatest artists of the Netherlands have found an inspiration that makes their art appeal through its humanity.

But it is on Sunday when they are seen at their best. Then the courts and closes — and, by the way, the air in them is free from odors of all kinds, for they have the continual North Sea winds for a besom — are cleared of

litter, the very paving stones and bricks scrubbed clean, the little wooden shutters closed over the lace-draped portholes, the doors locked, and the men and women of Scheveningen in their Sunday best repair to the Old Church behind the dunes. The women are in fresh-frilled, snow-white caps of linen or lace adorned with the gold pins given them by mother or grandmother on the occasion of the first communion, in silk aprons, numberless black petticoats, and the heavy full capes of mauve, pomegranate, Gobelin blue and olive green. The men dress in thick reefers, loose full trousers, black velveteen slippers, and waistcoats adorned with a rare silver button or two.

The Old Church of Scheveningen is the only one in all North and South Holland in which I felt at home. In fact, I might add that, with the exception of the Cathedral at 's Hertogenbosch and the little Catholic chapel in the Begÿnenhof in Amsterdam, it is the only church in all the Netherlands for me. The interior is simple, beautiful and inviting. The graceful white pillars of the nave have delicate green capitals — a mood color of the North Sea when it rolls above sun-filled shallows. The old pulpit, high up against one of the pillars, has for a background beyond the column a large window set with stained glass, in color the same pale sea-green that decorates the capitals. A looped curtain near it is of the same shade. Under the organ, at the end of the nave, are high-backed wooden stalls, rising one above the other, that form an

exquisite setting for the faces of the young girls who occupy them. The stone floor is sunken and worn both by feet and water. In the corner by the entrance stands the backbone of some sea monster, walrus or whale. The sanctuary is redolent of the sea.

I was present at the Easter morning service. The large church was filled, the men on one side of the nave by the pulpit, the women and girls facing it on the other. (The children were one and all at their own Children's Church in a court around the corner just under the terrace.) The snow-white table for the communion was set down the length of the nave It was a brilliant morning, and the strong eastern sun shone through the sea-green glass window behind the pulpit and fell upon the upturned, earnest faces of the hundreds of white-capped women and girls. Those faces were transfigured in that pale green translucent light that caught here and there on a gold or silver hair-band or a silver chalice. This light took the strong color from their faces. It smoothed away all lines of toil. The physical ravages of care and hardship were annulled, and the spirit of worship was free to give itself expression about the eyes and mouths. I cannot imagine a sight at once more artistically beautiful, more humanly appealing, more spiritually uplifting, more suggestive of Humanity's possibilities.

Oh, Rembrandt van Rÿn! If — it is a large one — if only you had been born a hundred years before your time! If you had been a member of the Catholic cult, and

if you could have seen the interior of the Old Church of Scheveningen on a bright Easter morning, you would have painted a Madonna with just that same wondrous light upon her face — the transfigured light of *The Night Watch* — a light the influence of which would have spiritualized a continent, even had your Madonna been but a peasant mother of Scheveningen.

And the singing! The plain-song, without parts, of hundreds of strong voices that are used to call to one another across the abysses of the sea, its marvellous resonance rising, falling, swelling like the sea-surge! This song thrilled like the sound of many waters, sending forth in slow, deliberate diapason the worship of hundreds of those strong men *that go down to the sea in ships*. I shall never hear the like again, unless in Scheveningen. Every cadence was a great wave of harmony that found its echo in the sea — a requiem for those lost, a pæan for those saved, a thanksgiving and a prayer.

CHAPTER X

SOME DIVERSIONS AND SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

DURING our winter in The Hague we had three enjoyments which James called "chronic": One was the Vÿver and Vÿverberg in the centre of the city, another our fishing-village of Scheveningen, and the third the beautiful Old Scheveningen Road.

The Vÿver and its surroundings have been for two centuries a classic of The Hague. It has been painted more times than any other portion of the Netherlands, with the exception of Scheveningen. We never tired of it, whether we saw it by sunshine, by moonlight, in morning mists or at sundown. It is unique of its kind, and its evolution from the "pond" through two centuries may be traced in the paintings of the *Gemeente*, or Municipal, Museum of The Hague which stands on the corner of the Korte Vÿverberg. The whole setting of this Vÿver is very beautiful; add to this that the buildings all about are rich in the history and the making of history, that they are connected with the names of some of its greatest men, John and Cornelius de Witt and Van Olden Barneveld, and one readily understands why it appeals both to the eye and the imagination. The grouping and setting are shown in the title-page vignette; but

the effect of color on the waters, on the island in the middle, on the roofs of the Binnenhof buildings, must be seen in order to realize why this locality has become a classic.

We used to stand on the Korte Vÿverberg and look down the length of the Vÿver at sunset. In the distance, against the deep crimson of Holland's winter sunset, the tower of the Groote Kerk showed like a delicate etching, the anatomy of the trees on the island and along the Lange Vÿverberg could be traced against the glowing heavens, line for line, in branch and twig. The roofs of the old buildings of the Binnenhof were touched here and there with deep crimson shadows. Here and there a window-pane caught the reflection and flashed a signal from the Parliament buildings, and the swans graced the rose-pink waters with their whiteness.

In the early spring the effect was almost unreal, so extraordinarily beautiful was the play of lights and shadows upon and among the tender green of the young foliage. The island was a green mist, the waters a reflection of white cloud-mottled heavens; the white façades of the houses on the Korte Vÿverberg seemed to shimmer with the reflected light from the pond, the storks on the island lifted their white-gray wings, as a lady lifts her draperies from the street, and tiptoed in their dainty "red shoon" of nature's make along the green-set tiny shore.

It was but a step to the *Gevangenpoort*, or Prison Gate, the first gate of the Netherlands through which we entered into the history of this wonderful land, into a conception of what it has cost the land to stand where it does as a national entity. The prison with the "bloody hand" in stone at Antwerp, and the Prison Gate in The Hague stand for eighty years of martyrdom, national and individual. These two and the "Grande Place" in front of the Hôtel de Ville at Brussels, where proud Egmont and Horn went to the scaffold, still speak of history with no uncertain sound.

James and I saw in all these "Motley illustrated," and realized how he could write as he did of this nation and its achievements. The *Gevangenpoort* contains all the cruel instruments of the Spanish inquisition, save the *Iron Virgin*, and brings one into close personal touch with those two patriot brothers, John and Cornelius de Witt. There is nothing left in the Netherlands that speaks so loudly of Holland's history in those times that tried men's souls as this old prison. Shut yourself into one of the cells for the condemned, and relive something of the horror of a living death, then count the thousands that suffered in truth and for the truth! I know of no spot in Europe where history is so powerfully brought home to one as here. Of the architecture of these remarkable buildings, or *poorts*, throughout the Netherlands, James says — and I am sure he is authority — that when a comprehensive history of Dutch architecture

shall have been written, it will be time enough to go into detail. Until then one may consult, if he will, the various writers on Holland who have endeavored to convey to their readers some idea of the architecture which is Holland's alone; and with this all is said.

Our other chronic pleasure was the Oude Scheveningsche Weg. It was always beautiful, always satisfying, and the life along its various thoroughfares of tramway and roadway, omnibus-filled and overflowing with Scheveningen white caps and fish baskets, bicycle path, sidewalk and riding path, always interesting and never disappointing. On Sunday it was our delight to walk along its length together with the crowds of sailors and sailors' lassies. About New Year's, when all the fishermen make it a point to be at home with their families, the avenue was alive with them, and their unique costumes — they don their best for holidays — made a continuous stream of color from the lodge entrance to the very shore itself. I never tired of watching the independent swing of their multiple petticoats, the sheen of their rich silk aprons, the wonderful colors in their one-patterned cloaks, the superb carriage of their white-coifed heads. We rejoiced in the sober courtships that we saw begin with Christmas under the green-branched trees, or in the "little Scheveningen woods," and end about April with a betrothal in the marriage room of the renovated old Stadhuis near the Groote Kerk.

We tried the opera, not once but several times;

then we gave that up; it was no recreation and made us homesick. No German operas are given in German, and I heard but one Wagner opera, *Tannhäuser*, while there. It was given in Dutch, and the Elizabeth destroyed all illusion, for she must have weighed fully two hundred and fifty, and her white draperies were sufficiently voluminous to fill a dry-goods show window. We tried *La Petite Bohème* by an Italian company containing a remarkable tenor. It was given in a new building, the "Art and Science Building," which is modern enough to be provided with a fire-escape. I was startled one afternoon in early spring, after leaving a symphony concert which had been given in this building, to see a file of stately *mynheers* and *mevrouwen* descending the walls of the building by means of the new skeleton fire-escapes, thus setting the public seal of their approval on this innovation. I shall never forget that special performance — nor the performance by the Italian troupe.

The building is large, with three galleries and a rectangular floor-space; it accommodates, I should judge, about three thousand. When we entered the lights were dim, but we discerned that the floor-space had a few occupants only; the first gallery, for which we had tickets, ditto. Above us there were more, and the third loft — it was nothing but that — was filled to overflowing with Italians! The troupe was Italian, and every Italian far and near had made it a test of patriotism to be present.

How they enjoyed that opera! And how we enjoyed their enthusiasm! How the whole loft hissed for quiet if so much as a sepulchral whisper was heard from the thin ranks of the first-class ticket holders! How they cheered the heroine — to the echo was no misnomer in the great empty hall! How they wept and sobbed over the pathos of the death scene! How they almost fell over the rail in their endeavors to obtain a last view of the tenor as they clapped and stamped and "bravoed" him into the wings! But the last scene proved almost too much for us both. The hero, long, thin, curly-locked, and dressed in black, wept into a handkerchief as large as a small tea-doily, and with every drop of his head into the cloth something like an answering sob shook the loft. When with frantic haste he hauled and pulled and wrestled with a small typical Dutch bedstead until he finally placed it in the middle of the bare stage, and the heroine settled her draperies upon it, the tension in the Italian contingent could be felt, and there was audible a deep sigh. It was all so real to the emotional, warm-hearted sons of the South! And we were willing to shiver through the entire performance — there is no heat for first, second, or third class in Holland, even in February — and see our breath mist before our very eyes, for the sake of enjoying their enjoyment. The singing was fairly good, the acoustics and ventilation poor.

The Royal Opera House is the favorite with the good people of The Hague. It is sufficiently conservative to

suit them. I mean not only as to the operas presented, but as to the arrangements for exit and entrance for safety in case of fire. It is always crowded, for one reason, it is the fashion. Every woman who can provide herself with a season ticket does so at the risk, I was told, in many cases of going without a third meal. The result is one sees the same faces night after night. They affect French opera, and the Italian operas are given also in French. A consultation of the programs for a month will show the repetition of such old acquaintances as *Martha*, *Faust*, *Mignon*. What we should call questionable French opera is often presented. There is one Mephistopheles on the stage whom I have never seen equalled for acting, and whose compass and beauty of voice are remarkable. Of the others little can be said. The Hague remains, despite its population of more than two hundred and fifty thousand, provincial in most respects. The opera, the opera house, and the patronage show this, as well as the dimly lighted streets and the only recent introduction of a few lines of electric trams.

It may not be amiss to give a fact or two about this special opera house, so beloved by the dwellers in The Hague. And they are what James calls "personally conducted facts," our own experience.

A tax is paid on the seats besides the price of the tickets. James said that ought to insure our being shown to our seats by ushers, but this proved a vain supposition. James hung up his coat and I my wraps in a narrow

corridor indifferently lighted. He paid the fee the woman demanded, and asked for an usher. There was no usher for us. An employee opened a narrow door and motioned us in. We motioned to him to show us seats. He shook his head and shut the door on us. The lights in the house were down; the curtain had just been rung up in *Faust*. We felt our way down a steep flight of steps to a level of the floor which, like all else in Holland, appeared to be considerably below sea level. In the crowded house we discerned ahead of us two vacant chairs and we made for them, past a phalanx of solid womanhood that did not budge one inch for us. They proved to be our numbers. There were no aisles; no proper exits; no marks by which, in the darkness, we could have found our way out, or distinguish door from wall. It was one packed human mass from floor to ceiling. There was no ventilation, and the temperature, owing to the many people and hermetically sealed interior, about eighty degrees. If it had not been for Marcoux's magnificent voice — I wonder that our country has not heard him in some of our great centres — we would have worked our laborious passage out again, and been thankful to escape with our lives.

As it was, we remained through the wearisome "pause" to the end, and, during the fifteen minutes that it lasted, had the doubtful pleasure of reading a rhyme painted in large letters on the asbestos drop-curtain, which exhorted us in case of fire *to keep cool, go out*

on the street, and remember that we were on a level with it.

"Now I call that the finest kind of irony that has ever come in my way," said James, as we left the fire-trap at a quarter of twelve; "to put hundreds of human beings into that puddler's pit where a panic would mean certain death to most of us, and admonish us in poetry from an asbestos curtain, that can't burn, to 'keep cool and clear out, because the street is near at hand.' That out-Dutches the Dutch! How do they expect us to get out? There are no exits except those cattle drives of doors reached by a two-foot wide step-ladder! We'll try the balcony next time." And we tried it to our entire satisfaction, for we thereby proved that Dutch Royal Opera Houses are not the places for honest Americans who value their lives.

Thomas' *Mignon* was to be given on request. We scented the presence of the court in that announcement and secured the best seats to be had in the second balcony. The season ticket holders preëmpt the house on such occasions. We climbed two steep flights, turned into a blind landing, toiled up a third winding flight and deposited our wraps in a corridor lighted by one flaring gas jet. The balconies are divided into what James called "box stalls." Each stall is provided with some twelve seats tier above tier. Every seat was occupied and people sitting on the steps. Fancy that! No possible exit to right or left. It was a case — as James grumbled

into my ear from his seat behind me — of paying your money to take your choice of a leap over the balustrade into the orchestra seats, or of climbing the steep ascent behind us on the shoulders of other men and women, only to be wedged at last into a two and a half foot doorway from which there was a "blind exit." He is not often nervous in public places and never in real crises, but he was that evening.

It was a gala night for the house, and the audience was in full Dutch dress. A moment before the curtain was rung up the house rose as one to greet their queen as she entered the royal box. I had already had a certain kind of presentation at court, and her features were not unfamiliar. I sat there nearly opposite to her for three hours, and I had time to study the face of this young royal ruler. The face had always interested me as I had seen it in photographs, it was so full of life and the joy of living. At eighteen she was a beauty. At twenty-six she has aged nearly twenty years from that youth. It is sad, pathetic almost, to see such a change; for to the young, life's cup should be brimmed to overflowing. This is the "divine right" of youth. Poor little queen! Too young to bear the burdens of a royal name and what it entails! My Scheveningen mother with her two baby girls and six months' boy, with the scant two dollars and a half for her fisher-husband's eleven days of toil on the great North Sea, possesses treasures for which you would give all your riches, your castles and

palaces, to make them yours. God pity the woman in the queen!

I have no knowledge of the actual state of mind of the loyal Dutch in the anomalous position in which their kingdom is placed by the present circumstances of their royal house of Orange-Nassau; but, from what I gathered from the speech of a few wise men, young and old, and from the trend of the public mind as reflected in the daily press, I may venture to predict that, in case the direct succession of the House of Orange-Nassau should fail, the Dutch Republic will be no longer an idle name or a memory of the past. The United Provinces of the Netherlands must fulfil their destiny whether or no, as must every other nation. Republican in spirit they have ever been, republican in name they may still become, but never in the lifetime of their beloved queen. May it be a long one, and full of good works among her people!

After our exit from the opera, James sighed for the "fleshpots of Egypt": the cosy supper at Young's which we used to enjoy because with us such treats were necessarily rare. He found the poor beer, the poorer coffee, the poorest of poor buns, which were provided downstairs for the material refreshment in the exhausting "pause," an unworthy substitute for the home delicacies of soft-shelled crab, etc. After trying this "diversion" of opera going in Holland several times, I urged him to give it up. It actually made him blue. I tried to have him see some fun in the stolid crowds that, after dinner, prom-

enaded up and down the Lange Poten, but his usually keen sense of humor failed to be whetted by this diversion also. In this case I laid it to the mist and darkness. But he said he couldn't see common sense, not to mention fun, in my wanting to entice him to "go with the procession"; no shops lighted, no cafés illuminated, no sidewalk, everybody in the middle of the narrow street, a dark, silent, moving throng tramping back and forth — for what? Just to tramp because their great-grandfathers happened to tramp there before them! And so on.

I found this method of killing time for James a useless one, so wisely gave it up, and indulged him by going twice as often to the shore, where he was never tired of walking or riding, for riding there was. We had that pleasure many times; a good mount and a brisk gallop up and down the hard sand floor of the North Sea when the tide was out, the wind fresh in our faces, the waves crisping afar, and the Dutch cavalry on the distant strand manœuvring with great show of charging the retreating waves and retreating from the advancing ones, was a real tonic. They made a pretty show on the beach, these small divisions of cavalry, detachments from the standing army of the Netherlands, and they, together with the shining brass milk cans, the gay carts and the Scheveningen fishwives, often brightened our avenue as they jolted and rattled through it with their empty gun-carriages.

I ventured to ask the Captain, an acquaintance whom we had made through letters of introduction, the

size of the standing army, and could hardly keep my countenance when he informed me, "About four thousand." He added that the raw recruits in the spring would increase the number to twenty, and they could call upon a trained reserve of two hundred thousand. Afterwards, when I recalled the fact that, until recently, our great United States had done very well with twenty-four thousand, I was sorry I had felt an inclination to laugh. His statement agreed perfectly with a newspaper paragraph in regard to the camps provided for the sufferers from the floods which occurred later in the spring; it ran: *A detachment of troops has been sent to the spot consisting of one officer, two under officers and ten men.*

Evidently it is not quantity but quality that tells with nations as with individuals when it comes to prowess in arms. The small Dutch army continues to manœuvre on land and in water, like amphibians, and to practise its evolutions like any other body of bold defenders. It sends its officers and men to India, to the Spice Islands, to all its foreign dependencies, and the men return broadened by contact with other civilizations, and work as leaven in their native land. Were the Netherlands ever threatened with foreign invasion, not a man, woman, or child but would resist to the death. This is the brave little land's surest defence.

But for one diversion James was always ready, after I had introduced him to it. There is a fascinating *winkel*, or corner shop, on Prinse Straat, all glass window and

immaculate tiling. A range of curious construction is set against one wall, and a man and woman attend to it. The man in white duck sits on a stool beside a pewter tub and ladles out of it a spoonful of a certain mixture. He pours it upon a large iron mould and the substance comes out in a half-dozen waffles. They are unlike anything but themselves, and once James had a taste of them, he could never have enough. No day was too dark, no weather too inclement, no work so pressing as to prevent his accepting my frequent invitation to the "waffle-winkel" for the pleasant sake of eating them with *poffertje* additions. Take a tray of sand and dimple it with drops of water, and you will have in miniature the mould of a *poffertje* iron. The *poffertje* itself is a round puffy fritter.

Many an afternoon in the dark — the delicacies are made only from four to six — we have stood at the clear-shining window and watched the *waffle-chef* at his fascinating work. An American or any other waffle has not even a speaking acquaintance with the genuine Dutch article as manufactured in the corner *winkel*. It would need a Charles Lamb's descriptive powers of "suckling" and "crackling" to catalogue their excellence. They are crisp, melting, tender, succulent, I think, at least they gave me that impression, it might have been the thin syrup added to them, and wholly digestible. At all the little and big *kermesses* there are *poffertje* and waffle booths, both well patronized. But

there are waffles and waffles, *poffertjes* and *poffertjes*, and those in the shop on Prinse Straat are as superior to all others, as a Delmonico lunch is superior to one served over the counter of a Fourth Avenue restaurant. After we had watched the fascinating process for a while, James would exclaim, "*That's* mine!" and rush in to the small, dark, back room, furnished with two tables and a few chairs, and order that special lot.

He never had to be cajoled into a trip to Rotterdam to see the impressive mass of old St. Lawrence's tower from that special corner of the Groote Kerkplein diagonally opposite the Street of the Tower, where stands the tiny old house with the fruit-postal-and-candy *winkel* on the first floor. We saw it once at noon when a multitude of doves came down into the irregular Place to be fed. The air was aflutter with them; the roof of the nave, that sloped to the Place, white with them; the steep gable of the tiny *winkel* was alive with them, and there were bright sunshine and blue sky — an exceptional winter day — to perfect the picture. Only *Venice*, and its *Piazza* at dove-feeding time, can equal this.

We were not loath to walk afterwards to the noble windmill on the Coolvest, or over to the Boompjes, the old-time "little trees" on the Maas Quay from which one may see half the riches of South Holland on the water. We used to run into the Boymans Museum for the sake of looking at those two canvases by Ary Scheffer — Count Eberhard and his son — and to find the few by our

favorites, Israëls, Mesdag and Maris. We liked always to give a special greeting to that fine, small boy by Jan van Scorel, the great predecessor of Rembrandt.

With Amsterdam distant only forty-five minutes by express we found it not taxing to go over for a few hours and enjoy the glories of the Ryks. Perhaps there was a walk afterwards along busy Kalver Straat, and a stepping aside from all the rush and roar of the metropolitan life into the lovely Begynenhof, unheeded by many, because unknown. I recall one day in April when we were there, and the noise and confusion of Kalver Straat, the Dam and Damrak, drove us into this oasis of rest and quiet beauty. You will find it, if you look for it; and you may enter from Kalver Straat and make your exit by the Spui, or *vice versâ*. No noise of traffic penetrates into these courts which are in the very heart of the commercial district. The old church, the quaint houses, the ancient pump in the middle of the court, if it can be said to have a middle, the entrance like a close, and the exit through a portal, all invest this one spot with a charm not easy to define.

This church is now Protestant, but there is hidden away behind a common house exterior on another side of the court a little Catholic chapel. A common street entrance to a steep flight of stairs gives one no hint of the beauty within the baize doors. The stairs gave upon the gallery of the chapel. There was no one there but our two selves. Oh, the perfect peace of that lovely interior!

Where was the commerce? Where the daily strife for gain? Where the sound of the money-changers? The sunlight brightened everything; the exquisite candelabra, the hanging gold lamp, the quaint pulpit. Below, near the altar on which the tapers were dimmed by the sunlight, a nun was making ready the Repository, for it was Holy Week. She was moving softly about her reverential work of love, as, I doubt not, the Sisters of St. Begga moved about intent on the same holy errand centuries ago.

One can understand the staying power of the Catholic cult when one happens to witness such a scene as this. I could have knelt at the feet of that "Mother Mary," so warm and human and sympathetic was this little chapel after the barren, whitewashed, chill and dreary wastes of the Groote Kerks and the Oude Kerks that seem to have missed their calling since the introduction into them of another form of worship.

But all honor to the Dutch people and their leaders that such a service can take place in the heart of Amsterdam to-day! That the fiery furnace, seven times heated, of the never-to-be-forgotten Inquisition, through which they were made to pass, left them refined into toleration, at last, of all religions, and caused them to grant perfect freedom of worship to one and all believers in their midst.

Would that our revered Pilgrim Fathers had from the first taken this lesson to heart!

The social functions were few and far between, but so thoroughly Dutch in character that I may be pardoned for recording what otherwise would be trivial personalities.

I have mentioned a "kind of presentation at court." This statement, if I left it unfinished, might lead to the supposition that I was a welcome member of the court circles while in the capital of the Netherlands. This is so far from the truth that it becomes a matter of conscience to make an explanation. An American, an acquaintance of ours, was anticipating a "presentation at court" through the mediation of a lady in waiting to the queen during the week in Amsterdam which by custom and law the crowned head of the Netherlands must pass there once a year. At least, that is the way the lady made the statement to me. I reported it to James. Now, whether my husband was a little piqued because his wife had no friends at court to make her known to the queen — because he really has a very good opinion of his wife and wants her to have "the best" with "the best"—or whether, as I half suspect, he was laughing at my suddenly developed imperialistic tendencies and wanted to cure me of any flights into the higher latitudes of Dutch royalty, I cannot say, for I do not know. But I am inclined to think the latter motive was the true one for his action. I only know for a fact that one morning in December he looked up from the newspaper and said:

"Come with me, Persis, and I will present you at court, that is, all the court at which you will have an opportunity to shine during our winter in The Hague."

I was surprised, but asked no questions, as I was willing to be surprised further, and I hoped pleasantly. James took me down the Old Scheveningen Road that even on that dark chill day, looked inviting; for the grass, wherever it showed, was emerald green, and the great tree trunks moss-green; the huge brass milk cans on the tiny carts looked like shining gold, the riding path was lively with riders, and the white caps of the peasants everywhere in evidence. We went on down Zee Straat and stopped long enough to take a look at our Utrecht poulterer's shop. We leaned a moment on the bridge by the *Scheveningscheveer*, or ferry, where one sees a pretty bit of the old-time 's Gravenhage, another name for The Hague, and then on down the Noord Einde to the square opposite the palace which is the winter residence of the queen.

A few people were gathered there, and James took his stand, with me at his side, by the pediment of the equestrian statue of William the Silent. It was a silent crowd that little by little gathered with us! There was no chat, no jest, no greeting, no fussing about, no blowing on cold fingers, for the day was chilly, no stamping of feet for warmth — nothing but a dead silence. I at once guessed the reason of this gathering: the queen was expected in from her country place, *Het Loo*, near

Apeldoorn, and a portion of her loyal subjects were foregathering to welcome her. I realized then that *this* was to be my presentation at court, and in my own mind began to consider ways and means to reward James for his trifling thus with me. But I said no word. Neither did he. The shadow of William the Silent was upon us, or would have been if there had been any sun.

A few police in top-heavy helmets paced back and forth keeping the line, which scarcely wavered an inch, from the square. Now and then an officer pranced and caracoled up the street. Meanwhile we were kept back from the thoroughfare of the Noord Einde which runs through the square and was open to traffic. Old Dutch ladies with umbrella and dog took as usual the middle of the street and kept the right of way; handcarts of all kinds trundled after them; grocers' boys on bicycles, their huge baskets mounted in front of them, coke carts, milk carts, vegetable carts, dog carts, now and then an automobile, a squad of police, *urbaines*, passed by us, but no voice was heard! Two puppies, even, that were rolling over and over in a tangled snarl, failed to growl. The crowd increased to perhaps three hundred. They had waited already three-quarters of an hour in the cold. At last there was a movement, a craning of short necks, the sounding of a postilion's horn. No, it was only a fishwife. The crowd settled back again. A hackney coach drove up to the palace loaded with all sorts of luggage. A lackey came out. Another cab and

another and another followed, all loaded with parcels and traps of every description. Some modest, plain-looking people got out and entered the palace.

After a procession of this sort, together with the vendors' carts, had held the Noord Einde for fifteen minutes, a modest carriage drove up with a footman and coachman. The necks craned again. The queen and her consort had come, and heads were bared with much the same gesture as at funeral obsequies; but not a word, not a cheer, not one wave of a handkerchief, except my own! There was a bow without a smile from the occupants of the carriage, and the palace doors closed behind the royal pair. The Dutch put on their hats and still stood — from the force of inertia. An Englishwoman, who stood beside me during the long wait, turned to me and said: "If that had been *our* king we should have yelled. Did you ever see the like?" And I answered truthfully that I never had. Now every one knows the loyalty of the Dutch to their queen and their love for her, but no one would ever have suspected it from that chilly reception. I was told afterwards that the queen dislikes any demonstration on the part of her people. Speaking as an extremely private individual, who does not pretend to criticise royalty of any kind, it would seem more politic at least to encourage a little heat of enthusiasm among the Dutch. There is little enough in the whole land — the climate, heredity, and history for the past three hundred years are against it; but, oh!

if she could but know how a good hearty ringing cheer would have warmed her heart on that chilly day when she came back to the capital in which she dislikes to dwell! If she could hear that sound often she might live on its loving strength through many a trial, present and future.

This was my only presentation at court. James asked me how I liked it.

"I haven't been half so much bored as I should be in Amsterdam; besides, this function has saved the expense of a court dress. So you're in pocket by it, my dear. Let's go in and have a chocolate to warm us through."

There was little after this in the way of "society." But we attended the masked ball of the winter given by members of the gentry and nobility — a private affair to which we were bidden by our new and helpful acquaintance, the Captain of La Haye, as we called him between ourselves; a man whom it was not only a pleasure to know but one whom we would have liked to reckon among the five or six friends we may count upon. We were privileged to make that friendship afterwards, and were glad to know so sturdy a Dutchman who showed us the finest traits of the Dutch character at our own fireside. As an artistic affair the *bal masque* was beyond anything we could offer in our own country. The costumes were real costumes, and we realized these people had many generations of ancestors from which to draw upon in the matter of detail in dress. It was a brilliant affair, and

for once I had the pleasure of seeing "high Dutch life" amuse itself in its own way.

We enjoyed most the quiet little dinners at home, with the Captain to tell us so much of interest concerning his own country. We could hardly wait for the spring to roam a bit and see something of what he told us. He was a nature lover, and his country's soft beauty and harmonious coloring satisfied him more than the grandeurs of other lands.

Perhaps the greatest trial to our nerves was the Week of Sundays. From Christmas, of which the Dutch until recent years have made little as a fête, and only now is the English custom of "trees" beginning to obtain among them, until the third of January the whole city appeared as if in mourning. Five days out of the seven were called Sundays and treated as regular holy days. A stock of provisions had to be laid in, milk, bread, etc., for three days. There is no selling. The shops are closed. There is no singing in the churches to mark the day, and no decorations. The working people do not work; the leisure class wear away the time. Scheveningen alone became towards New Year's uproarious — but Scheveningen is Scheveningen, and although no kermess is held, the license of the kermess prevails. James saw a sailor mounted on a cow faring down Keizer Straat, and the drunkenness was pronounced to that extent that the police were doubled. It was the only time that a woman might not go at night the length and breadth of The Hague and its fishing suburb with impunity. The whole

population is for three hundred and sixty days in the year so decorous, that when once it gives the reins to its idea of having "a good time" one must expect surprises of an unusual kind. Our New Year's reception, for instance, was something never to be forgotten.

At nine o'clock our first caller made his appearance dressed in white duck trousers and white cotton gloves. He sent in his card. It read: *A happy New Year to you from those Without Work.* A promising beginning! He received the regulation gift which Anna Engelina informed me was a *kwartje*, ten cents. He had something also from James, who was vexed with me for conforming to so mean a custom as the gift of a *kwartje* on New Year's! "For heaven's sake, Persis, give the poor devils enough to live on for one day at least!" he said, and followed the man out to give him something more substantial

After that we had a continuous stream of callers until four in the afternoon. Every one sent in his or her card with good wishes expressed in every conceivable way. These cards were mostly printed with the name of the caller. I received my *werkvrouw* in this way, my butcher's man, my butter-boy, my milkman and baker, my grocer-boy, my cokeman, my other fuel man, my poultry-girl, the street sweeper, the man who attends to the water mains, the postman who brought letters, the postman who brought packages, the postman who brought papers— there is a division of labor in Dutchland — the man who

brought the daily paper, and so forth and so on. I can't remember them all. I only know I sat in my dining-room with a stream of *kwartjes* dribbling out of my purse and that James sneaked out of the front door — they all are privileged to call at that on reception days — and handed out guldens till about twelve, when his small change gave out and he began to see, although he would not acknowledge it, that I was right in keeping within the bounds of custom, for he soon realized there was no immediate prospect of an end.

After the regular callers had ceased to send in their cards, we had a raid of beggars. From five o'clock on, they pressed their wild appealing faces, most of them women and girls, some children and men, against the great window-pane in the dining-room, sometimes as many as four at once, and begged and begged until James put on his coat and fled to the beach. He said he "needed exercise," but it was because he could not bear the sight of those faces and hands that would not be denied. It is the one day when the so-called proletariat is privileged.

The Dutch, like every other nation, has its own industrial questions to regulate and settle, and it is confronted like other lands with serious situations which are beyond the wisdom of man to control.

I held no other large reception during my residence in the Dutch capital. James said one was enough for him.

CHAPTER XI

THE KNOCKING AT THE GATES

EVERY few years there is an insignificant break in some dyke by which a small *polder* is flooded, acres of arable land ruined and some one or two families lose their homes. Now and then it happens that a portion of a dyke on some one of the islands of Zeeland is undermined by the constant gnawing of the tides, and crumbles; a breach is made through which the sea-water enters and covers the farm lands, bringing to naught the work of generations and making new shoals to exercise the mariner's caution.

There is but one watchword for this land: Eternal vigilance. This watchword entails such foresight, such exercise of engineering powers, such espionage, such labor in repairing and strengthening the sea defences, the sea and river-gates, that only those who have been privileged to see something of these works,— these ramparts and bastions against the invasion of the waters, — and witness the devastation caused by a general breaking of the dykes, when the sea enters triumphant and inundates the land, can realize something of this word's significance.

The story of the breaking of the dykes and the great

inundations, caused by the inrush of the sea, has been told from father to son for many generations. Yet, despite this, and the fact that it stands written in records and old chronicles, the thought of all that terror of devastation is dim now; the reading is almost like a myth. Those times when provinces, cities, villages, were overwhelmed, when great forests disappeared from sight beneath the waters never more to be seen above the engulfing waves, seem, even to the Dutch themselves, tinged with the fabulous. 1200 is so far away; 1500 not much nearer, and the middle of the seventeenth century, when a great inundation took place, a remove of eight generations — long enough in the past to allay any fear, with the watchword ever in mind, for the present. Since the seventeenth century no flood of great importance has occurred until this year.

One evening after dinner the Captain was showing us an army map of the provinces of Utrecht and Gelderland, and marking out for James' instruction and mine the line of water defences which would be opened in case of foreign invasion. They extend deep into the land. He told us that as a child he had seen a break in a dyke near 's Hertogenbosch, or Bois le Duc, in the province of North Brabant, and what an impression it had made upon him. By his father also, who had been *dÿkgraaf*, or Dyke Count — Superintendent of Dykes — he had been told of one by which their home was flooded and valuables ruined by the water.

"But," said James, "have you no fear now?"

"Oh, no," he replied in his earnest way; "they are so strong now; we have no fear."

This was in February when high water was reported all along the Upper and Lower Rhine, and the thousand or more windmills on the Zaan, north of Amsterdam, appeared, from the illustrations in the newspapers, to be setting sail for a long voyage down stream. Both banks were under water. The rise of the inland waters is gauged with such nicety, and the system of "coming high water danger signals" and the telegraphy so perfect, that from hour to hour a rise of the Upper Rhine or of the Maas, is recorded and telegraphed all along the line of waterways and the infinite number of branches, that the inhabitants may take every precaution by closing the river-gates to guard their property from destruction. In this way much danger to shipping, wharves, warehouses, farm lands and private property is averted. This is also true of the Scheldt.

But it is quite another thing when the confines of the German Ocean become too small for their contents. Then there is nothing for it but to wait upon the powers of wind and tide, and hope they may not combine at an inopportune moment. If the conditions of high north-west winds and abnormally high tides obtain at the same time that the Upper Rhine and the Maas, swollen by rains and melting winter-ice, send down their fulness to the North Sea, there would seem to be but little that could save the land. That the North Sea might rise up

in its might and *pour over the tops of the dykes*, was not to be imagined by the present and a few preceding generations.

But this is just what occurred, to the utter terror and consternation of the inhabitants of this hollow-land, much of it so far below the level of the sea and merely reclaimed sea-bottom. As a result, lack of confidence in the dykes as protection has been engendered, faith in the resisting power of the sea and river-gates has waned, and a haunting fear of danger substituted.

From the middle of January high winds prevailed, sometimes for a week. The Old Scheveningen Road after one of these windstorms was strewn with branches; the sand was blown into Keizer Straat. There were wrecks reported all along the coast. The shipping broke loose in the Maas. We read in the morning paper only a word or two: "Helder No. — gone down," and we knew that broken hearts and orphans' tears were filling some humble home near the great northern dyke with pain of loss. And this high wind continued to shriek and roar around the eaves and down the chimneys until, as James said, "it got on the nerves." During these nights little sleep for anyone was possible within two miles of the shore. The esplanade above the Old Church was not to be attempted. We wanted to see the sea from there, but the drift of spume and sand was like a mist, and would have dimmed all sight even could we have stood against the pressure.

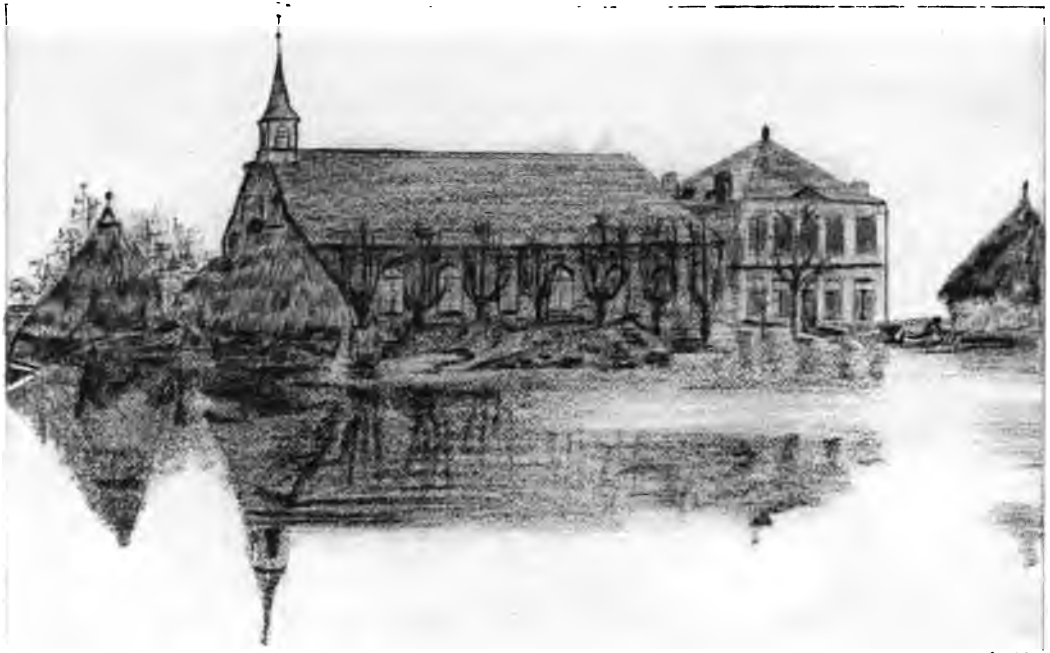
We read of the overfull Rhine, the overflowing Maas,

the lawless Scheldt. A few months afterwards we saw recorded on a public building just above the steamer landing at Coblentz, the height of the Rhine at that time — the highest water mark ever recorded there. We went down to Rotterdam one day and found the water in the Coolvest in the centre of the city even with the street. These winds continued to blow at intervals until near the middle of March; then suddenly they increased to almost hurricane force. For fifty hours a northwest wind howled like a thousand fiends let loose, shrieked like a bedlam of banshees, wailed like the lost souls of a whole race, and deluged the coast lands from The Helder to Zeeland-Flanders in sounding fury. It was the time of the spring tides, and they were abnormally high. For days the German Ocean had been pouring its waters, driven by the furious winds southeastwards, onto the coast. For two days and nights the sound of the rising tides carried on the great winds boomed in our ears. Then the Unexpected happened.

We can never forget that night. The tide turned about two, and its coming was heralded from afar by a sound so awful that no words are adequate to describe it. All that night the great spring tide, goaded by the gale, continued to heap itself higher and higher and hurl itself against every rampart of the coast — against every dune, every dyke, from The Helder to Walcheren. It hammered on the iron flood-gates of the sea, it pounded against the

DESOLATION

OUD VOSMEER



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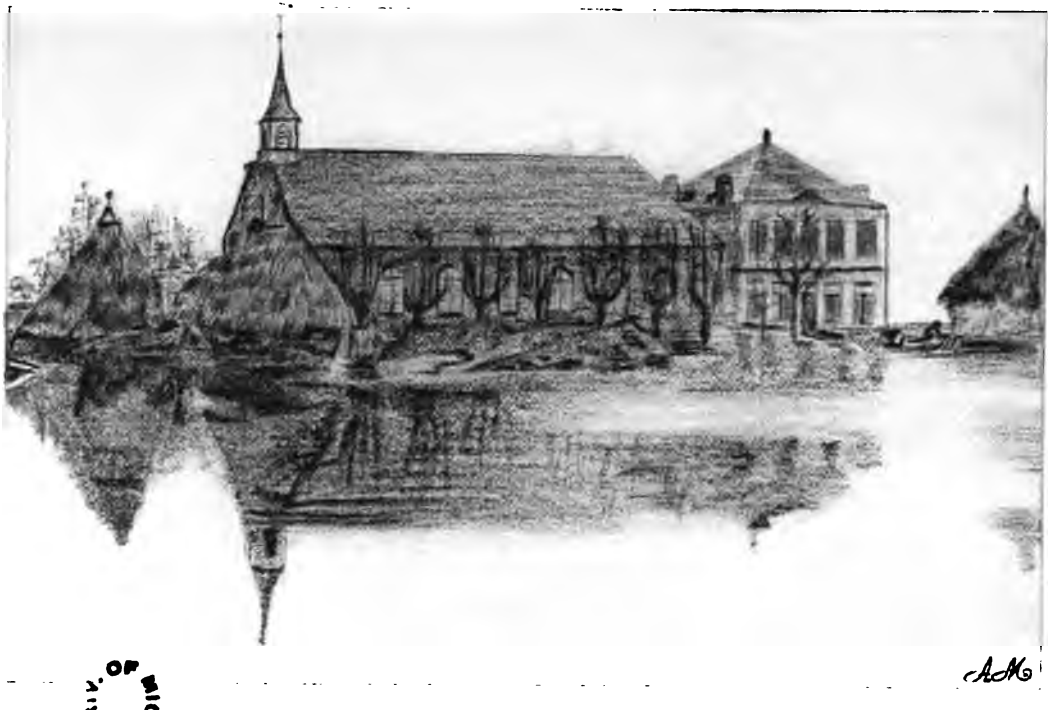

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dunes, breaking them and undermining them. It rolled up to every wooden river-gate and tried to force an entrance. In the terror of that dark early morning, the belfries on the churches throughout the threatened land sent forth their warning; but it was too late. At seven o'clock of March 12th, the thunderous knocking of the sea at the gates of the trembling land was obeyed. The sea refused to be denied admittance. It claimed its own again. A dyke gave way on Tholen, another in South Zeeland. The dykes in South Beveland heard the call and opened. At Antwerp there was a break of several hundred feet. In the sea defenses of The Helder a great rent was made. Marken was a watery expanse. The *polders* north and south were under water. The sea-dyke at Moddergat was broken. At St. Annaland the sea-defense opened for two hundred and forty feet. Oud-Vosmeer was drowned out, and the skippers of Tholen sailed their sloops and schooners through the great rents in the dykes from one village to another!

The sea had forced its entrance, and, not content with breaking the dykes, had risen up and poured over the protecting ramparts, flooding the *polders*, containing a hundred thousand acres of the richest tillage in the Netherlands, rendering thousands homeless, destroying barns, wharves, warehouses, dwellings, drowning thousands of cattle and sheep, burying graveyards deep beneath sea sand, stripping trees of branches and hedges of twigs,

stripping, also, from hundreds of families their hope and every earthly possession.

Had this cataclysm occurred in the night there would have been another record for the centuries of thousands who had found death in the merciless sea. But human life was spared, and, after the second great tide of March 13th, that completed the devastation, the sea ceased to knock at these great Water-Gates of the Netherlands, and left the half-drowned land and its forlorn people free to draw one breath without being in terror of their lives.

As an aftermath, we saw one day the women of the nobility and gentry, with bands on their arms, on which was printed, "For the sufferers from the Flood," and a tin cup in their hands, standing on the street corners and walking the avenues of The Hague, asking alms. They let no one pass them whether on foot or on horse, whether a Scheveningen peasant woman, or a lady of the court, a vegetable vendor with his cart, or an officer on horseback. They thrust their tin cups into both public and private carriages; they appealed to every passer-by, were he banker, butcher, president of the senate, or day laborer. A cent was received with the same cordial thanks as a gulden or a stiff bank note. The young Ruler went down into the stricken islands to show her people her sympathy by her presence. An old woman on Tholen asked her queen into an humble fisher's hut

and bade her rest. A Tholen youngster of five went up to Her Majesty — which was no majesty to him — and of his own accord extended the small hand of fellowship with a cordial, "How do you do, Queen?" or *Kwaën*, as he pronounced it in his dialect. It was the one touch that made all the world akin for a moment — for a moment, only, alas! But I fancy Life itself showed another, a new face to the young queen at that moment.

I, too, wanted to go down into Zeeland at the time of the great inundation; but James objected, and the Captain advised us to wait for the tardy spring. The weather was inclement, the land flooded, trains running irregularly and a possible prospect of railroad dykes giving way, and more dykes succumbing to the inevitable. He further advised us if we should find our stay limited in the Netherlands, to spend most of our time in Zeeland. He declared it to be the most interesting portion of his country, and we were quite sure he knew his own land. And he told us, moreover, that the only true way to see the characteristic beauty of his land was from its water ways. Thereupon I had what I shall always consider an inspiration: I proposed to James to hire a boat and knock at these same sea and river-gates, as well as at all the other gates of cities and towns, and inform ourselves about these defences of dunes and dykes, and the life of the people who live either on or behind them. James agreed at once, and immediately asked the Captain to join us as companion and guide. He was not loath, I

am pleased to say, to accept our invitation, and promised us so to arrange his furlough, if possible, that he might be with us at least three weeks in Zeeland, and a day or two in some other place. He begged us not to go into any detail of paraphernalia for sleeping and eating, as, from time immemorial, the water ways of the Netherlands had been its highways, and beds and food could be found in passable inns all along our route which he therewith sketched out for us, — much to our delight, for it coincided with certain lines of travel which we had planned to follow.

How we looked for the spring! And how it tantalized us by long delay! I was positively sure that on the seventeenth of January — the last marigold having just faded on its stalk in our garden — that I saw a pussy-willow showing its tail over in the Scheveningen woods. I know the crocuses were up in the last of February and a pink oleander bud made an abortive attempt to blossom. The climate is not severe in South Holland, nor is it particularly trying. There are no great changes in temperature. The mercury averaged during the months of December, January, February and March about forty. It is the absence of sunshine, the prevalence of the cool mists that make a stay in Holland depressing. The nights are interminable; the days only a few hours long; the gas is lighted as early as three in the afternoon — once we were obliged to light it at half-past two — and the mornings are really gone before there is light

enough to accomplish anything. This condition of things it is that makes the sun-loving and sun-wonted American homesick in a strange land.

After the crocuses came a flurry of snow. We had had but two small storms during the winter, and those caused an outburst of editorial tirade because it lay three inches deep in the principal streets for two days! Then followed the chill winds that, without being in any sense cold, brought with them a feeling of discomfort. We were glad that Ben Hardon had been prevented from coming to us before May. These winds continued throughout the first part of April; then came the spring, quick with its tender beauty. The rooks were loud in the garden, the ducks lively in the bright waters. The Oude Scheveningsche Weg was a green mist of young foliage. The swans in the Vÿver plumed themselves in sunshine — at last! It behooved us to leave our nest, now that the birds were building theirs, and take to the water like the ducks.

CHAPTER XII

THE NEW PILGRIM FATHERS

Of course we set sail from Delfshaven, and, naturally, we called ourselves *The New Pilgrim Fathers*. At first James objected.

"But there isn't a father among us, Persis! — and won't be, even when Ben and the Captain join us. It's a misnomer, and I, for one, don't like to sail under false colors in a foreign country."

"I'm not asking you to sail under false colors, James. I'm going to fly — that's the word, isn't it? — the Stars and Stripes from my masthead and the Netherlands' colors at the prow."

"Stern, you mean."

"Well, what's the difference, bow, or prow, or stern, so long as they fly? And as for calling ourselves after the Fathers, I don't see why it isn't just as logical as to christen our house *The Stork's Nest*, when there isn't a bird of that species to be found on a nest short of the Zoo at Rotterdam." I felt my argument to be conclusive.

"Oh, well, if you've set your heart on it, I don't mind! but doesn't it sound rather sentimentally forced?"

"Sentimental? Now, James Moulton, where is your

idealism? If you would only apply it in the right place! Haven't you told me a dozen times in the last fifteen years that life, to be interesting, whether on land or sea, must have its sentimental factor? Haven't you told me time and again that we must relapse now and then into sentiment pure and simple in order that we may be strengthened to meet prosaic fact?"

"M—m; well, perhaps I have said so under stress of weather; but I never intended my sentiments to come back at me like boomerangs just because the wife of my bosom has decided she is to be a new father."

"Now, James, I protest."

"Don't protest, Persis, but put on your things and we'll run down to Rotterdam, select a boat — and surprise Ben and the Captain."

"Oh, James, you're a —"

"M—m; let me breathe —"

The Spring had been calling enticingly to us for a week past. The hyacinths were in blossom, the tulips in bud. The thrushes and finches were filling the Scheveningen woods with their spring music. The tree-tops were thickening with reddish brown buds. The young green of willow and lime bordering the canals was reflected in the quiet waters Every owner of a boat was busy with a paint pot freshening his winter-worn *pink*, or *tjalk*, or *kof* into a semblance of the green of eternal youth. It was high time for us to be knock-

ing at all the Gates of the Netherlands for admittance into the joys of a Dutch spring.

Rotterdam suffers from a plethora of boats. From the Rhine Haven all along the Maas they overflow into the canals within the city, and offer to the would-be voyager an embarrassment of choice.

James said I might have it all my own way and he would pay the bills, which was both dutifully masculine and marital. And it was such a delight to have my own way in just this special direction! Nothing and nobody to consult but my own sense of the fitness of things. By "things" I mean boats. But which to choose?

There was the *pink*, the heavy fishing boat of the North Sea. There was the sharp-prowed *tjalk*, and the cumbersome *kof*, the barge of the canals. There was the motor boat, new, trim, a concession to progress. Finally I chose one — with James' approval, for I dared not take the whole responsibility — that James called a hybrid: a cross between the various crafts. It was provided with steam-motor power, but carried a large sail. We could, in fact, sail, punt, steam or be towed, according to our pleasure and the exigencies of wind and tide, deep waters or shallow.

That boat was the joy of my heart and the pride of my eyes. It was painted bright apple-green like thousands of its fellows. A broad white band defined the gunwale. It had a large cabin, white within and without, shining

with brass, and ornamented with several dozen of old purple-blue and white saucers and plates, of a quality like our great-grandmothers' willow-tree bowls. Its little square windows had the regulation white lace curtains, and on the broad ledges were pots of flowering cyclamen and primroses. It was high from the water, broad of stern and sharp of prow. The great sail was a fine old burnt-sienna brown in color — iron-rust red in the sunset light. There was a cubby-hole for a cook-stove and utensils forward, besides two bunks below; and aft there was a space for an awning and deck chairs. Included in the boat's fixtures were the owner, his wife and uncle, genuine Zeelanders, all three. The wife was to be our general "help"; the man and his uncle our crew.

We gave the woman three days to make ready for us, sent on board some comfortable furniture hired at Rotterdam, and ordered the man to proceed, when all was ready, to Delfshaven.

On the day of our departure James and I explored that ancient town. As we made our way up the old Haven Street we harked back in thought nearly three hundred years to a time when the real pilgrims trod that same way — many, I doubt not, with heavy hearts, — when they listened to those last, comforting words of their preacher, John Robinson, when they set foot on the *Speedwell's* deck and went forth into the Unknown — fathers and mothers and little children, unaware of

the mighty nation that in due time, which proved to be God's time, should arise to do them honor, so few, so poor, so weak!

As we stood before the old church that leans to the street by the inner waters of the haven, and looked down into the haven itself, so filled with hull and mast and sail that little of the water was visible, I heard James quoting softly under his breath that lovely verse from Lanier's "Psalm of the West," beginning:

"'*Mayflower piteous heartease petal* —'"

We did not call our nondescript craft *The Mayflower*, in deference to the possible sensitiveness of certain New England societies, nor *The Speedwell*, because, as James said, that special ship belied her name and "never got there." We preferred to honor the United Provinces of the Netherlands and christen it *The Broomstick*, in appreciative recognition of the services of that famous Admiral Martin Tromp, who proposed to sweep Holland's enemies from the seas, and mightily accomplished his fell purpose. It was a thoroughly Dutch broom that we purchased at Rotterdam and affixed to our mast. Not by any possibility was it to be mistaken for one of American manufacture. We were forced to admit, unpatriotic as it may sound, that, as it flaunted boldly, I should say stood nailed rigidly to the mast beneath our flag, it was decidedly more picturesque in

THE EAST GATE OF DELFT

From an Old Plate

appearance than the carpet-sweepers indigenous in the United States.

Thus, being ready for our Odyssey in Dutch waters, we sailed from Delfshaven on a bright April morning in all the glory of our green paint and burnt-sienna sail, and made a slow untroubled passage along the busy Schie to Delft.

About four in the afternoon, beneath radiant sunshine, we drew near to this most Dutch of Dutch towns, and, passing through the wide swing bridge, moored in the Singel Gracht hard by the famous East Gate. To approach Delft in the afternoon sunlight, to pass through the East, or St. Catherine's Gate, and wander along the Oosteinde till one comes upon the dark apse of the New Church, to pass within its shadows only to emerge abruptly into the sunny open of the market-place, is to relive the century of William of Orange.

The market-place is backed by the Stadhuis, and dominated by the New Church tower that springs, arrow-like, straight from the pavement nearly four hundred feet into the blue. To see it as we saw it that day lively with crowds of old and young, filled with white booths piled high with blue earthenware, wooden shoes, and every necessary article in the Dutch peasant's domestic economy, to wander farther to the Butter Bridge and, standing there, look down the vista of the Oude Delft canal to the ponderous square tower of the Old Church, leaning like a northern Pisan Campanile

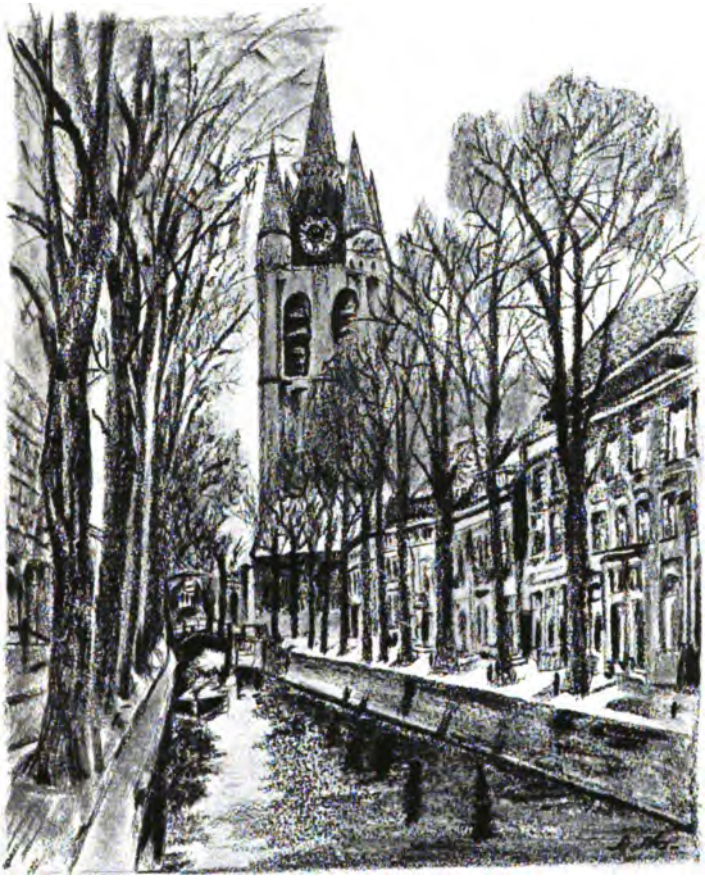
to its mirrored reflection in the rippleless blue waters, is to understand, at last, whence Vermeer of Delft drew his inspiration for his famous painting in the Mauritshuis at The Hague. It is to understand, also, how any one who has once come under the spell of the Netherlands' intimate life by entering into it through the arched way of the East Gate of Delft can never cast it off, be the environment thereafter as sordid and prosaic as it may.

Afterwards, as the shadows were lengthening, we stood in the staircase within the Prinzenhof, just opposite the tower of the Old Church, and relived in imagination that hour in which the pride, the hope, the support of the United Provinces fell in the person of her great leader, William of Orange-Nássau. It was all so bare, so chill within those white walls, that, to the inner eye, the immortal struggle for Dutch independence seemed in such surroundings to take on its true complexion: the livid hue of an eighty years' martyrdom.

Chill, too, and dreary, robbed of the grandeur of solemnity by wooden enclosures and partitions that obstruct the view, the interior of the New Church — old church of St. Ursula and mausoleum of the House of Orange — seems unworthy of its occupants. Within, only the marvellous angel of victory by William the Silent's tomb seems in keeping symbolically with that triumphant life. Without, only the towering spire, that carries the eye upwards and ever upwards along

GENUINE OLD DELFT

OUDE KERK AND OUDE DELFT CANAL



its reaching height, symbolizes fittingly the supreme personal faith of that Prince to whom the Netherlands owes its national life.

It was a positive relief to go out into the soft April twilight; to listen to the thrushes mingling their whistling song with the notes of the tinkling carillon in the New Church spire as they dropped streetwards in the dusk; to walk along the Oude Delft under the budding limes, and linger by the Wynhaven until the last bit of daylight faded from the darkening gables of the ancient Province House of all Delfland, and the red, azure, and gold of the various arms set thick on its gray façade, gave forth no single gleam of their rich coloring.

The contrasting life of the crowded water ways of the Maas and the Schie, which we left behind us, and that of the quiet, almost deserted canal that leads from The Hague to Leyden is so marked that, upon entering it on our way to the home of the Pilgrims, we had, as it were, to tune ourselves anew to our environment.

Our great sail was set, and slowly — for there was little breeze, and what need had we to hasten? — we fared along the still waters and watched the coming of the spring. There was little talk between us that day, but the long silences were eloquent. Speech seemed almost a desecration in the inarticulate calm of the innumerable meadows about us, of the bright still waters beneath us, and the infinite blue depths above us. To the north, south, east, and west stretched miles of green

pastures banded with silver. Now and then we passed a farmhouse, its red pyramidal roof, its conical thatched ricks huddled behind a group of elms and limes that showed their still meagrely graced anatomy clearly defined against the blue sky, which seemed to canopy the humble dwellings of man and beast so low it arched above them. At long intervals a sleek-thatched windmill's moving arms heightened by their rotating shadows on the grass the vivid young green of the spring. Here and there a man was turning over the earth with a primitive plough, a woman was planting, another was beating her linen white in a small side canal.

All the homely, patient toil of the earth was visible to us that day, as well as the workings of an ever-miraculous natural life. The ewes, big with young, lay upon the meadows quietly biding their time. Flocks of lambs were wonting themselves awkwardly to the use of legs. Magnificent Holsteins made patches of black and white upon the pastures, and everywhere lay great garnered heaps of willow shoots which were to be utilized for dyke-thatching and wattle-work of all kinds—windbreaks, sand-breaks, fish creels and market baskets.

It was the Holland Without of Today, the Holland of Mauve and Maris, as Delft, in its chief characteristics, is still Jan Vermeer's Delft of near three hundred years ago.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CITY OF THE CROSSED KEYS

De Amicis, writing his classic on Holland a generation since, says: "Leyden, the antique Athens of the North, . . . is one of those cities which make you thoughtful upon first entering them, and are remembered for a long time afterwards with a certain impression of sadness. I had hardly arrived when the chill of a dead city seemed to fall upon me. . . . In the smaller streets you walk upon long tracts of grass, between houses with closed doors and windows, in a silence as profound as that of those fabled cities where all the inhabitants are sunk in a supernatural sleep."

We of another generation found it otherwise: gay, bright with clear-flowing waters, its streets filled with a varied, moving life, and the Old Rhine, over whose death in its decrepitude at Leyden and Katwÿk De Amicis mourns throughout a whole doleful page, everywhere in evidence as the busiest, most helpful and still most picturesque of rivers. Decidedly, in Leyden it is a case of old wine in new bottles — and good Rhine wine at that.

What life the river, even canalized as it is, gives to the town! How it individualizes it! What would the northern

Athens be without its Rhine that, in its old age, has grown in grace of manner and courteously shows a stranger the way at every turn? How honored it is with as many baptismal names as a prince of blood royal! It is sociable and democratic as well. Make a companion of it for half a day, as we did, and experience how it will hedge you in with a high Rhine dyke on the one hand and a low Rhine dyke on the other; how it will delight you as the Old Rhine entering the city hard by the ancient Zÿl Gate, and its blue eye remind you — just there as you lean upon the bridge to watch the river craft as they pass below you — that the force of its impetuous youth at Schaffhausen and its virile manhood beneath the shadow of Ehrenbreitstein are still with it. True, its strength is no longer concentrated; it is diffused throughout the length and breadth of the Netherlands as arterial blood to enrich and to strengthen.

It will entice you across the Rhine Bridge, and along the length of the Rhineburger Singel back to the Zÿl Gate, whence it will show you the vivacious Rhine Haven. You come, at last, to feel that you are at the mercy of the jesting Rhine that masquerades under a half-dozen aliases in the Low Countries; yet you cannot resent its surprises. Follow the Old Rhine. It lures you citywards to the Fish Bridge. There you find the small lakelike expanse of the Still Rhine that holds you enchanted in the very heart of ancient Leyden and all its neighboring charm of Stadhuis, Castle, Weigh House,

Butter Market and St. Peter's Church. If these do not hold you too long, the low colonnades of the *Korenbeurs*, or Corn Exchange, will show you a fine curve of the New Rhine that leads you on to the Rhine Quay, where, for a time, the river bids you farewell.

And well we fared! First to the Stadhuis which shows the touch of Lieven de Key, the architect stone mason of Haarlem whose hand graced every stone it touched. He is the Inigo Jones of the Netherlands.

"I'd like to make Leyden's arms the world's!" James exclaimed, as we lingered in the tapestried rooms.

"Why Leyden's, especially?"

"Because those two crossed keys on the old Zÿl Gate are significant of so much. To me, one of them stands for the unlocking to the world of that seventeenth century of Dutch art that was made possible by those who possessed the key—Rembrandt van Rÿn, Gerard Dou; Metsu, Mieris and Jan Steen, all of them Leyden's sons. The other opened the door of that wonderful historic sixteenth century that stands among its fellows as the apotheosis of bravery, national, civic, personal—the bravery of the men, women, and little children of the Netherlands. But it's too fine to waste a word on." Therewith he grew clamlike, as his way is when he feels deeply.

I left him with his thoughts and walked again through the ancient suite of rooms unequalled, I believe, in Europe for the beauty of their wall-tapestries. They are a feast

for the eye, these cool blue-greens — Holland's own harmony of neutral tints — in the deep woodland vistas that are seen in the rare old pieces of Delft's warp and woof. The contrasting golden lights in the ancient French Gobelins on one wall seem a forecast of that transfused atmospheric glory of the Barbizon School of painting.

Afterwards we climbed to the narrow encircling balcony above the belfry of the Stadhuis tower, and looked and looked, but could not look our fill. Beneath us rose in irregular collocation Leyden's mass of huddling, red-tiled roofs, and in and out among them wound the dark blue ribbons of its water ways; the whole was set in the young green of springing grass lands. Above us the delicate, gray broach-spire towered to the wide-spreading cool grays of April's changing skies. To the south, clear and dark against the horizon, the forest of The Hague showed the rounded crowns of its tree-tops thickening into foliage. To the left the square mass of the Old Church tower and the aspiring shaft of the New Church at Delft were silhouetted against the smoke-haze that, dim in the farthermost distance, gave us a blurred impression of Rotterdam.

Some pigeons hovering about the spire and flying low over the roofs beneath us completed the illusion: we were reliving with *The Burgomaster's Wife* the story of Leyden's travail of siege in that fateful 1574, as only Georg Ebers has been able to tell it.

OLD ZŸL GATE

LEYDEN

CHAPTER XIV

AN EX-VOTO OFFERING

We lingered in Leyden, for the city charmed us, and there was something of interest for every day and hour. We did exactly as we chose, and, I'm quite sure, we generally chose to do what no one else has ever cared to do.

We leaned by the hour on the guards of the swing bridge hard by the old Zÿl Gate which, as James said, is decidedly "off its base." It is hunched and settled, and, seemingly, shrunken with age. We never tired of watching the various craft — yellow-ochre sailed, brown, white, burnt-sienna, and black sailed — that, laden with turf, lumber, willow-withes and country produce of all kinds, enter from the Old Rhine by the Zÿl Gate into the ample Rhine Haven.

The man poles his boat, the woman steers, and the inevitable dog keeps up his running accompaniment from one to the other. The bridge tender drops something on the end of a long fish-line to the woman as she passes beneath him. It is a little wooden shoe such as the peasant children wear. In the toe is tucked a slip of paper which the woman extracts, and for it she substitutes the two or four cents toll according to the craft. One may see the drop of this fish-line with its small

wooden shoe for bait whenever a bridge is opened for a passing boat.

We walked up one street, or *singel*, or *gracht* as it chanced, and down another, aimless, but blissfully content just to walk, to enjoy, to revel in the simple nothings which can never be found in any earthly guidebook, but which make for the joys of the true traveller: the clatter of a multitude of wooden shoes on the pavements; the setting sun suddenly eclipsed before one's very face and eyes by a huge brown sail hobnobbing with one's elbow; that inexplicably entrancing twilight that luminously enhances all which it should enshroud until every vista, whether of land or water, looks to be a long, long road to Paradise.

We blundered in this most irregular fashion into all sorts of delightful experiences, and our "finds" were legion. Fancy discovering a real "Long Paradise Street" in the crowded poorer section of the little city! And in the near neighborhood, we ran down a quarry of artistic charm in a kind of *cul-de-sac* closed by an ancient gateway. Fancy ringing at the mysterious portal and having it open to admit you into a very Court of Peace — the *Joost Frans van Lindenspoort Hofje!*

These *hofjes* are an institution peculiar to the Netherlands, and to understand the reason of their endowment it is necessary to describe them. The Dutch care well for their poor, but they do something finer: they enable those of restricted means to live with "dignified frugality"

in the independence and freedom of their own firesides. What matter if the "fireside" be a pleasant fiction, and consist of a tiny grate and one blinking piece of turf or a briquette? It is his *own*. They are well worth description as well as study, for the principle underlying the endowments for these *hofjes* shows us one of the rugged foundation stones of Dutch independence, graced, where one least expects it, with ideality.

Picture within this "special" gate of the *Van Lindenspoort Hofje* a rectangular court set with grass, shrubs and a tree or two, bordered with spring flowers and laid about with a narrow paved walk. A blind wall pierced by the single entrance gate, and white with the bloom of a pear tree trained against it, forms one end. Two rows of tiny brick houses a story and a half high, one window and a door wide, form the sides. The other end is also a blind wall, provided with a pent roof. This covered space is furnished with table, benches and chairs, and forms an afternoon-coffee and smoking-room for the inmates of the *hofje*. The regents' rules, regulating hours of entrance, closing, and limiting the stay of *hofje* guests, are hung on the wall. The open front of this invitingly cool out-of-doors coffee-room is curtained with masses of ivy.

Such friends as we made in this fascinating *Joost Frans van Lindenspoort Hofje* that, long generations since, one of God's own noblemen endowed for husbands and wives honestly poor and honestly proud!

There was the gate-keeper, hospitable, and rejoicing in his trim little garden and his own bird-cage of a house, his home for the past fifteen years. There was his comely wife of seventy-seven, with never a gray streak in her shining dark hair, and only one wise wrinkle across her forehead to inform a close observer that she had had experience of life. There was the lately widowed Vrouw A, with manners becoming a duchess, who cordially invited us into her immaculate snuggery, and showed us the whole house, which, like the others, consists of a small passageway, one tiny living-room, an infinitesimal kitchen — when she stepped into it the door could not possibly be shut — one bedroom above, and an apology for a garret. The prices paid for the houses vary in the different *hofjes*. Widow A's cost her husband seven hundred gulden, a matter of two hundred and ninety dollars, some twelve years ago. This sum is equivalent to a life-lease for both man and wife. It is hers unto the end — then another fortunate couple, having arrived at the age limit of sixty, will occupy her peaceful dwelling in this little oasis on life's "Western Slope."

These *hofjes* are in no sense a charity. They are a graceful recognition on the part of the men who endow them of the two great basal principles upon which the superstructure of the happiness of the whole human race has been and will continue to be raised; one is altruistic — I am my brother's keeper — in its most practical in-

terpretation; the other individualistic, in that it accords to each man independence with economy, ease with frugality, and acknowledges the unit of the family. The houses are furnished by the owners always cosily and comfortably, sometimes richly. Many an heirloom in old mahogany or fine porcelain gave me an envious pang. With their Lares and Penates about them these old people provide for their own tables, receive members of their families and their friends as guests, smoke their pipes in peace, and drink their coffee to the gossipy accompaniment of wifely tongues and the click of knitting needles in busy fingers. It was a joy to see their joy in the fact that they had visitors from America. "From America! From America!" our old gate-keeper shouted in his excitement, and more than one head appeared at the tiny windows in response to the unwonted cry.

"From America, thank God!" said James, reverently. With one hand he tucked my arm through his and, despite the fact of our having been married fifteen years, squeezed it hard in the presence of our *hofje* friends; with the other he shook the old gate-keeper's hand so substantially that I feel sure the *Joost Frans van Lindenspoort Hofje's* open-air coffee-room was redolent of Java, tobacco, and honey-cakes for a month afterwards.

"Persis, do you know what I'll do if I get the award for the plans of the new Peace Conference Palace at The Hague?"

"What, James?"

"I'll endow an American *Persis and James Moulton of Boston Hofje* for indigent husbands and wives; and when you and I are old, Persis, we'll —"

"What, James?"

I got no verbal answer, but I *knew:* we would gladly seek in our old age a refuge in just such a dear little Court of Peace, and be happy, oh, so happy! — providing only that we might be together.

James hummed "John Anderson my jo, John," all the way to our modest *Café de Harmonie* in the Breestraat, where we took our dinner. I smiled to hear him, for I knew his heart was still within the four walls of *Joost van Lindenspoort's Hofje.*

Afterwards we took our way through intricate side streets, across a courtyard, beneath an archway guarded by a rampant stone lion of the Netherlands, and climbed the winding path to the eminence that is crowned by *De Burcht*, a thousand-year-old remnant of a supposed fortress, and, standing there beneath one of its great round arches, we watched the sun set over the red roofs of Leyden, home of our Pilgrim ancestors! Later on, in the long twilight, we made our own daily pilgrimage to what should be every true New Englander's Mecca: noble St. Peter's Church in Clock Lane, where John Robinson lies buried.

Yes, *our Mecca.* Scrooby, Leyden, Delfshaven, Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay — every one is a name for all

born on New England's soil or who have New England's blood in their veins to conjure with; names that should stir both young blood and old to new endeavor, that should call to mind the supreme faith of those Few whom Lanier with deep poetical vision names:

> *"Godly hearts that, Grails of gold,*
> *Still the blood of Faith do hold."*

The wonder is that the small bare chapel, beneath the pavement of which John Robinson lies in an unmarked grave, is not filled with offerings from across the sea. The wonder increases as we linger in the great church of St. Peter's, that no monument erected by New England's sons stands within it as an ex-voto offering to the brave heart that spoke courage to the Few, and sent them forth, heartened, to tread the winepress alone — and for us — across the sea.

"Oh, James!" I exclaimed, "I wish I might stir my own people to a realization of what they owe to Leyden and John Robinson! Oh, why, with the patriotic sentiment that prompts the formation of New England Societies and Mayflower Dittos and Colonial Dames and Revolutionary Sons and Daughters, can't there be enough recognition of the spiritual import of that migration to fill this poor bare stone chapel with lovely memorial windows and some masterpiece in stone?"

James smiled upon me indulgently. "'Why don't you

speak for yourself,' Persis, when you get home? I'll wager not a son of New England would resist such persuasive eloquence."

"*I will*," I said, firmly, much to his delight; but I quaked inwardly for, of course, James, being mine, overestimates my power with other men. However, I knew he wasn't making fun of me, so I took out of my bag my own little ex-voto offering — a surprise to James — in the shape of a spray of New England pine and a poor bit of faded arbutus vine, and laid them on the pavement of the chapel.

"I agree with you, Persis," said James after a moment's silence in which he looked his surprise; "there should be a noble monument to mark the very spot; this sort of thing is too indefinite, too impersonal."

"That's just the way I feel; and I'd put on one face of the monument that verse of Lanier's which is as applicable to the Netherlands as to the Pilgrim Fathers and to us."

"I know it!" he exclaimed, promptly, and quoted the very lines:

> "*Freedom lives, and Right shall stand;*
> *Blood of Faith is in the land.*"

"Yes," I cried delighted, "and your being able to quote it is a positive proof of the oneness of our souls, James! although our opinions *do* differ more or less."

James laughed. "Rather more than less, *niet?*" — James can be irritating even in his best moods sometimes. — "But you've made a fine distinction, little mother. By the way, you've kept mighty close about these bits of the real New England; — where and how did you get them?"

"From Lou."

"Lou?"

"Yes; and, oh, James, don't, I beg of you, ask me anything more about it now. I'm sure thereby will hang a future tale, and I don't dare to break the news to you, or contemplate the consequences."

"Oh, go ahead and out with it; you'll feel better."

"I really can't tell you now, James; wait till we're on *The Broomstick* again." With that he had to be satisfied.

CHAPTER XV

FIELDS ELYSIAN

FOR one day, with Leyden still as our base, we deserted *The Broomstick* and took the early morning train to Haarlem. The hyacinth fields were in the height of their blossoming and the tulips beginning to open. We wanted to verify the illustrated postal cards. We feared they were colored caricatures of the reality.

There is in the Mauritshuis at The Hague a notable landscape by Jacob van Ruisdael: a view of Haarlem taken from the dunes at Overveen. One can obtain much the same view from the train as it approaches the city, with an overlook of the famous flower fields which are miles in extent.

The early train was our choice, for at that hour, six or seven, light mists hang above the Low Lands and, without obscuring the view, enhance all natural beauty and soften the hard outlines of the city's architecture. That short ride was through Elysian Fields. By means of it we caught their whole effect and were spared details. Conceive of a rainbow trailing its earth-touching ends for miles and miles over the face of the country between Leyden and Haarlem. Conceive of the perfumes of Araby following in its wake! The whole surrounding

air was heavy with fragrance. The mists rose and fell over the rainbow-tinted earth, and the train sped on through an unreality of exquisitely harmonious coloring, until we saw the great church of St. Bavon rising like a grand ark of the covenant above the morning mists, and heard the guard call, "Haarlem." We descended, slightly dazed.

"Have you found the *pot of gold?*" were James' first words as we walked up the platform.

"I'm not sure, but I know I have come as near to finding it as I ever can."

"Same here," he said, emphatically. Then we took the electric tram to Bloemendaal and found that Huysum and Rachel Ruysch, with proverbial Dutch faithfulness, have painted their wonderful flower pieces to the life. We saw a field of early rose-pink and white tulips in bloom in which a single chalice would measure seven inches in diameter. We saw acres upon acres of hyacinths that showed an exquisite gradation of purple, lavender, pink, and white, and every single bell was the size of a small tuberose.

We returned to The Little Hague, as James calls Haarlem, and joyfully wasted our time until near sunset. We found out the *winkel*, or little shop, where they sell the famous Haarlem specialty in pastry, the *halletjes:* round thin cakes that have been made from the same recipe for the past three hundred years. And in that *winkel* we munched their brown

crispness with entire satisfaction and inner content. We ran into the Stadhuis just for the sake of shaking hands again with our delightful Frans Hals and all his jovial company of officers. We hob-nobbed especially with the Colonel of the Archers of St. Adrian and the fine Haarlem Burgomaster, and, in spirit, drank *his* health who looks out from the canvas with a raised antique glass in his hand, a glass in which the red wine — is wine, very blood of the grape. I have seen no such painting elsewhere; even Rembrandt has not excelled it. We took a farewell look at the ancient Meat House that stands half in the shadow of the Great Church, and from an obscure corner in the Great Market viewed the astounding high-shouldered bulk of St. Bavon's transept.

We followed the serpentine Spaarne in its windings through the city, and when the shadows began to lengthen we preëmpted the two seats on the front platform of the steam-tram, and joggled, with innumerable stops, for more than two hours through and around and into and pretty nearly over every small town and hamlet between Haarlem and Leyden; through Heemsted, and Hillegom, through lovely Lisse, past half the back doors of Sassenheim to the front door of the Red Lion at Oegsgeest. All this journey was through the heart of the flower country.

It is a cheek-by-jowl method of travel, and, until one becomes wonted to it, one feels as if he were an intruder,

ST. BAVON AND MEAT MARKET

HAARLEM

and experiences a strong desire to apologize for stopping within a foot of the inhabitants' windows and overlooking their intimate family life. It is an embarrassment to a modest soul to find himself being run, with a mighty clanging of bells, into a Dutchman's front dooryard and up to the very door before which the family are taking their afternoon coffee; but I confess to a better understanding of Dutch village life on account of this peculiar manner of travelling.

Like everything else it has its compensations: a soft breeze from the sea blows freshly into your face; the rotating shadows of a mill's great sails fall upon you as the tram halts beneath its sleek-thatched eaves; the small wooden-shod children make friends with you on the car steps and offer you great bunches of hyacinths strung on strings — a full peck for five cents! The night air is overpoweringly sweet with the incense shaken from an infinitude of dainty hyacinth bells; a thrush whistles to you from the top of a linden, and every turn of the highway, along which the tram is running, presents you with an unforgettable picture.

I recall at Hillegom an ivy-mantled gable by the side of a canal. I saw it at sunset across a wide foreground of early pink, and white, and yellow tulips. Some white doves were fluttering about the tiny pent-roofed dovecote affixed to the house gable and half-hidden by the draping ivy.

All about the fields and by the side of the canals lay

great masses of gathered hyacinths, as large as small haystacks: blotches of pink and purple against the green. They are cut early to strengthen the plant and insure good flowering for the marketed bulbs. This flower refuse the Dutch utilize as dressing for the fields.

As the sun sank lower its crimson light was reflected here and there along the narrow canals that intersect the fields, so banding them with brilliant color. Across many acres of pale blue hyacinths a group of barns and hayricks thatched with warm browns stood out against the level western light.

As the sun dipped to the horizon we passed the clear blue waters of a canal narrowing in perspective to the west. In the foreground was an old boat moored beside a field of white hyacinths. It was loaded above the gunwale with blood-red tulips. In the background a blood-red sun was sinking into the evening mists that were gathering beyond the dunes.

Such are a few of the aquarelles we hang upon the walls of memory. They serve to recall those illusive Elysian Fields.

CHAPTER XVI

THE HEART OF HOLLAND

Of Holland, not of the Netherlands.

When the Dutch speak of Holland they signify the two contiguous provinces of North and South Holland that lie along the North Sea coast in the west of the Netherlands. When they speak of their country of the Netherlands, they include both North and South Holland together with the southern provinces of Zeeland (with Zeeland-Flanders), North Brabant and Limburg, the central provinces of Utrecht and Gelderland, and the northeastern provinces of Overÿssel, Drenthe, Friesland, and Groningen — eleven in all. Hence it is a misnomer to speak of the United Provinces of the Netherlands as Holland. It is equivalent to calling New England the United States. It is wise to bear this in mind when travelling through the country, also that the difference in speech is that of Yorkshire and Devon, or of Mississippi and Vermont.

Place a pencil point on Leyden and draw a diagonal straight across country to Amsterdam. Weave about this diagonal in its entire length an intricate scrollwork that shall represent the continuously deflected line of water ways, lakes, canals, river, through which *The*

Broomstick found its way. There you have an outline of the midlands of Holland, and the scrollwork of water ways is a hem of blue embroidery that borders in its entire length the famous drained Lake of Haarlem. This is now, as every one knows, a miles-wide stretch of magnificent farm lands, or *polders*, circumvallated by high dykes for protection against the devastating waters. This country is one of the two marvellous lake-sections of the Netherlands.

"I never had much respect for the old Rhine when I was a boy," said James, as we leaned on the taffrail watching the distance increase between us and the ancient Zÿl Gate. "Cæsar prejudiced me. He gave me to understand that the old river 'petered out' in marshes; but I've changed my opinion since seeing it here in Leyden, and my respect is boundless."

"Don't quarrel with Cæsar, James, after two thousand years; it isn't fair. Besides, if he hadn't been here before us we mightn't have been here after him."

"Well reasoned, seeing that he was a Roman with imperialistic tendencies, and you are an American with anti-ditto. I think I can catch a glimpse of the slender link that binds us at this moment to those times." He pointed to a cubical Dutchman, square as he was thick, who was poling a raft. "I fancy the Batavians poled like that in shallow waters two thousand years ago."

We leaned to catch a last glimpse of the old Zÿl, or

Sluice Gate, bearing the crossed stone keys, Leyden's arms, in its escutcheon, of the lovely Rhine Haven crowded with bright-sailed craft, and of the old Rhine filled with barges; then passed the Spaniards' Bridge and steamed into the sluiceway that leads to the lake country.

Upon entering an arm of the first series of lakes, we raised our sail and remained under canvas the rest of the day — a day never to be forgotten, for during it we voyaged in a new world. Remote from traffic and manufactures, far from railways, steam-trams, motors, automobiles and all the paraphernalia of this unresting age, we sailed and sailed. No ripple could be heard at the prow, no motion felt on the boat. We followed the course of the curving blue reaches into lakes, the unique beauty of which I have no fit words to describe. We left the great tranquil pools of sapphire by narrow straits into inland seas set, apparently, for boundaries were not to be defined in the intricately interwoven expanses of land and water, with gems of islands. We rounded point after point graced with a windmill, a group of dwellings and barns gray-thatched amid the green. A tiny canal beneath an arcade of drooping willows served for a front door path, and a boat was moored where in an ordinary world one would find a garden gate. Now and then a strong-armed peasant girl would row far out upon the shining waters and, lying on her oars, wait the coming of the little

steamer that keeps this sacred country world in touch with the profane one of modern city life.

It was May. The fruit trees were in full bloom. The island-meadows were bright with wild flowers, and the soft air that drew across this enchanting land the freshest and sweetest I have ever breathed. A tranquil world of tender blue skies, and lush green pastures set in peaceful waters that faithfully mirrored both earth and sky; a spot that might, in truth, *restore one's soul.*

Kaag on the great Kager Lake has a situation so unique as to defy description. These isolated inland-water towns were a revelation to us both. As we entered the Ringvaart, the encircling moat of the drained Lake of Haarlem, with its wall of dyke topped at intervals by small dyke-hamlets, we felt ourselves to be once more of earth. It is, at least, possible to speak in intelligible terms of this portion of our journey. We never tired of watching the dyke-life, all open to the day, as we sailed slowly along. This dyke, that borders the great Haarlem *polders*, is high and narrow, although sufficiently wide to admit of a highway and a row of long, low houses at intervals. It is bare of trees save for the lindens that have been planted in a row directly in front of the houses. These have been cut off at the height of the eaves, and the branches trained from tree to tree and so intertwined as to form a screen, or façade, of living green which extends sometimes for fifty feet.

The dyke-life is barren in all respects; but it is Life,

and the babies in their tiny white caps and whitewashed *klompjes* play with the goat and chase him about the linden; the small boys and girls bob and jolt along the white bare highway, that marks the dyke, in high-backed carts drawn by the family dogs; the old men clatter about with blue butter-crocks under their arms; the women come to the canal to wash a stone jug, or bowl, or a piece of linen, and the maidens gather at the steamer-landing to watch for the daily boat and, perhaps, the expected letter or package. Love, and Life that is born of Love are here as everywhere, and the human interest seems intensified by the isolation.

Over the top of the dyke we caught glimpses of the great Haarlem *polders*. Now and then a barn heaved a thatched shoulder into prominence. Afar we could see something of the roofs of Venneperdorp in the very centre of what was once the shallow Lake of Haarlem.

As we drew near the white tower of Oude Wetering, and backed and filled into the narrow channel that forms the one village street of this rustic Venice, there was nothing for a while but silence for our wonder and amazement. Then James broke it: "By George, I wish Ben were here to see!"

"So do I," I responded, heartily; "the more the better to enjoy what must be seen to be believed." This was a stroke of diplomacy on my part, for I intended it to be an entering wedge in view of my "tale" of which, up to the present time, I had kept him in ignorance. "At

any rate the Captain will meet us at Amsterdam for a day."

"Yes," James answered rather ruefully, "but he is a Dutchman and knows it all. I want more American eyes to see this."

"Oh, we shall have enough in time," I replied, hopefully, and turned the subject. Little did James know the courage it took to speak this conviction which was based on knowledge!

Oude Wetering is one of those curious inland-water villages that, I must repeat, defy description. As James said, "It is Dutch marrow." The main street is the narrow strait that connects the Ringvaart with the extensive Braassemer Water which lies behind the village. On each side of the water way there extends along the dykes a row of low substantial brick houses, the curious architecture hidden here and there by a trained linden. The white tower at the entrance of the strait dominates the whole. Beyond the houses one sees the shining expanse of Brassemer. A little rustic Venice — this is Oude Wetering, with life all along its one water way, and pretty boats sailing "wing and wing," back and forth before its quaint dwellings and storehouses. We were loath to leave it.

Kaag, Oude Wetering, Aalsmeer, these three form the unique village trinity in the heart of Holland, and as the children say, so say we: The last is the best of all the rest.

Aalsmeer lies more than half-way between Leyden and Amsterdam. It is a collection of floating gardens — all nurseries for the flowers, fruits, and young trees that supply Amsterdam. Its fleet is flower and fruit laden. Its houses are set in the midst of these watery pleasaunces that are filled with bloom and brightness. A garden gate opens upon water-steps and gives a glimpse of the gay contents of hundreds of cold frames uncovered to the soft air and warm sunshine. Labyrinthine water-lanes, overhung by the delicate green of saplings, lead to back dooryards that are miniature lakes set round with shrubbery. Boats are everywhere in evidence among the green. A white sail forms a moving background for a house and garden. A black skiff heaped with white Easter lilies rocks gently in *The Broomstick's* slow wash beside a green thick-set hedge. Pear and cherry blossoms drift white upon the dark blue waters, and the westering sun slants low along the green lanes and renders the foliage translucent.

Oh, the floating gardens of Aalsmeer! We would cross the ocean, nor count the cost, just to see their beauty once more; just to inhale the fragrance, to watch the slow drift of the cherry blossoms on the bright waters, just to catch a glimpse of those green glooms and, beneath them, that black skiff, lily-laden, rocking gently in *The Broomstick's* slow wash.

CHAPTER XVII

HOW WE SAW AMSTERDAM

BUT Holland, North and South, is not all ideal, and with so many illusory joys there is plenty of lasting disenchantment. Broek in Waterland, for instance. De Amicis made it such a subject for jest and caricature, that I had a great desire to see for myself and enjoy the fun he has so generously provided.

On our arrival at Amsterdam, James found a letter from the Captain telling him he would be with us on the afternoon of the following day, and a cablegram from Ben Hardon which announced that young man's intention to be with us a day after the arrival of the next Rotterdam steamer. I made no comments when James read these communications, for the reason that I was revolving certain matters of importance in my mind: I wanted to be alone for a part of a day to think certain things over — by "things" I mean, in this case, not boats but "girls." At least, I call Cousin Lou a girl although she is forty if she is a day. I must add, not to be what James calls "woman-mean," that she doesn't look over thirty-two; Lois, her niece, is twenty, and James' second cousin. They, too, had announced their intention of spending several weeks with me,

having caught my enthusiasm and accepted an invitation I had given them in the winter when I did feel a little lonely at times, James was so absorbed in his work. I had not as yet imparted this news to James; but I had given several strong hints, hoping and expecting he would ask me to unfold my "tale." But he didn't!

I wanted, moreover, to see Broek in Waterland; and I wanted to go there alone, for I had a woman's sneaking joy in the fact that if I were alone I might find some bargains in old brass and silver in a small place remote from vitiating city Abrahams. As James can't abide bargains of any kind, I knew I should have no peace of mind if he were with me; so I told him I wanted to verify some of De Amicis' statements, now that a generation had passed since they were made, and would take the time while he was attending to some special business of his own.

"By all means, go and verify the statements," he said, with what seemed to me such unnecessary earnestness that I could but wonder if he, too, had something up his sleeve. There was a queer, now-what-are-you-up-to look in his gray-blue eyes that made me feel rather mean after all.

"Don't get yourself lost in Waterland, and be back in time for the Captain at four," he said, as he put me on the ferry for the steam-tram, "for I want to get out of this hole by tomorrow morning."

This *hole!* Amsterdam, the Northern Venice; Amsterdam, the Queen City of the North; Amsterdam, this hole! I knew something had gone wrong, and felt sure it was the environment rubbing him the wrong way after that perfect Yesterday. Nor could I blame him.

Amsterdam is unkempt, dirty, crowded, rushing, unsightly in spots, smelly, commercial in spirit and mercantile to the very mud of its canals. The elbowing crowds in Kalver Street, the go-as-you-please-life of Warmoes Street, the barren Dam, and Damrak robbed of all picturesqueness since its filling-in, the poor new Bourse, a cross between an American railway station and an Italian warehouse, all disenchant one. Its old churches, seen near at hand, are as lacking in dignity as a moth-eaten buffalo robe, an appearance which the brick walls have gained through time and neglect. The old Weigh House, or St. Anthony's Gate, is stranded high and dry in the midst of much city rubbish. This is owing to the filling-in of the canal that faced it — a process which is going on in all the principal cities and towns of the Netherlands. It is destined within a few years to rob them of their individuality. The clang and rush of electrics and automobiles, the great deserts of approach to the museums, the lovely Vondel Park backed by docks and the general dumping grounds for the filthy contents of the dredge that, apparently and of necessity, works day and night — all this destroys illusion. The stench from these last is comparable to that of the

AMSTERDAM

UNIV. MICH.

mud flats in the old Back Bay lagoon in Boston when the tide was out, and the Milldam an incubator for cholera germs.

I do not exaggerate: viewed from its streets one sees little or nothing of the Amsterdam that painters have loved. It is far from attractive. I might say it is repulsive, as its own people confess, and confirm their opinion by action, for they flee from the city whenever possible. The well-known saying, that the merchants of Amsterdam and Rotterdam make their fortunes in those cities to spend them in The Hague has become an axiomatic truth.

I have said "viewed from its streets" Amsterdam is not attractive; but I know that its fascinating charm can be greater than that of any other city, not excepting Venice itself; only it is the result of a different point of view. There is only one way in which to see Amsterdam as the queen city of the North, as the inspiration of poet-painters, and that way we took on the Captain's arrival and my return from Broek in Waterland to which I have been too long in coming — but the steam-tram was slow.

The country was deadly uninteresting, and I agreed with an Englishman, who ventured the remark to another of his nationality in the tram, that Holland is very flat! Decidedly so in Waterland. I found Broek across the steam-tram tracks — a small village with a bridge, a tiny haven near the old-new church which, like many

another of its contemporaries, has been through the fiery furnace as well as half drowned by floods. There is nothing distinctive about the place. I saw one cat, three men and two women while I was there, and, of these, all but the cat were in their homes.

I am an ardent admirer of *Noord-Holland*, a pamphlet-book I could wish every American intending to travel in Holland might possess. It is written in English by a Dutchman, and Mark Twain and Artemus Ward combined would fail to bring as many tears of mirth to my eyes as that innocent book has unintentionally succeeded in bringing. I have wept over the intense literary and patriotic earnestness that has produced for a resultant so much mirth-provoking and rib-tickling English expression of Dutch sentiment.

In hunting about this church to verify one of *Noord-Holland's* remarkable statements, I came across a stained window to see which was worth the tiresome steam-tram journey thither. It is like a pink-tipped daisy flowering in spring, the background is so pure a white, the tracery of pink and red so fresh and fair and delicate. It produced the effect of something blossoming white, yet radiant, in the dark church.

I visited a farmhouse, domicile, stable, cheese-factory all under one roof. The front hall led into the cow stalls. Evidently there had been no spring cleaning, for the proverbial Dutch cleanliness was wanting. Not a cow's tail even was tied up. Another image-

breaker! But the many Holstein calves were splendid specimens of calfhood, and the noble Holstein mothers worthy of their offspring.

But of the Broek that De Amicis described, not a vestige remains. The coloring throughout the village is neutrally quiet; indeed, in all the Netherlands I saw but one house the lower half of which was painted blue, and only three trees. This had evidently been done for some protection against ravaging worm or insect, as we whitewash ours. The Broek gardens were anything but grotesque, and the people must have been industriously quiet, or taking their ease as a leisure folk, for I saw nothing of them. Possibly a house near the entrance to the village is that to which De Amicis devotes more than one of his charming pages. It is a curiosity shop whose contents — I strongly suspect — are renewed yearly to meet the demands of tourist trade. I know of one insignificant American fly who, attracted by the charming exterior, hastened to accept the kindly invitation pressed upon her by a knowing Dutch spider. He made his opportune and amiable appearance as the said American fly had alighted with longing at his gate.

Somehow I persuaded myself that this special invitation was a flattering tribute to my feminine American personality, but I was quickly undeceived. I found that unnumbered thousands, from Napoleon the Great backwards to Peter the Great, and forward to all the Greats of the present generation, had received the same.

An iconoclastic place this Broek in Waterland proved to be! However, I was given the freedom of the house and for an hour revelled — doubtless Peter the Great, Napoleon and Co. had done the same — in the charming old Dutch rooms and their countless treasures. When I took my leave of it and Broek, I was loaded down with brass that I was assured was the "real antique": a coffee-pot with heater some two hundred years old, two Dutch lamps — of such unworthy name, I name them not! — contemporary I judge with the generation succeeding Metsu and Dou, and a flower-pot that might have passed through the siege of Leyden. I compared these treasures with the old turf-pot I had purchased at the auction in The Hague, and that seemed hopelessly new in comparison. I fairly gloated over the number of centuries, about eight as I calculated, I was carrying back to Amsterdam and James. My pride of possessor swelled to reprehensible dimensions at the joyful prospect of displaying them to his astonished eyes. Not a sign was wanting to assure me that *my* antiques were veritable antiquities.

"Stick to the water if you want to see Holland at its best, and Amsterdam above all," were the Captain's first words after our greetings were over as we sat in the restaurant of Polish name on Warmoes Straat, lingering over our coffee. "I can show you something so fine that you will search long before you find its equal, that is, if you will give me the pleasure," he said with that

winning straightforwardness which captivated James and me from our first meeting with him.

We gave him that pleasure with such alacrity that he half suspected the truth: we were tired of Amsterdam. While he and James were off to the Prins Hendrik Quay, where I promised to meet them in an hour and a half, I went up to the Rÿks Museum for the sake of having one more look at Rembrandt's *Stone Bridge*. If I never see it again I shall carry with me to the end the effect of that expression of translated light that is diffused over the small canvas and transfuses every object on it. It is the wondrous light of a new birth — whether of a storm-cloud, or of a new day, I do not know. But I have seen it before in nature, and I know that it is as wholly real as it is ideal. I know, moreover, that I realized something of its glory during the hours in which, from a large motor boat, we, for the first time, really *saw* Amsterdam — Amsterdam just at sunset, when the transfusing haze lends to the perspective of the canals the illusion of realized ideals.

Amsterdam in form is like the half of a spider's web. The concentric rings of its great canals are connected at right angles with countless smaller canals. Hence at every angle of the broken curve there is afforded, from the water, vistas that are always beautiful and picturesque and, in some instances, grand.

We entered the broad curving reaches of the Heeren Gracht, this *Canal of the Nobles* tells the character of its houses two hundred years ago. Along the whole way

the early spring foliage traced it tender freshness in delicate line and stipple against the blackened façades of the seemingly never-ending rows of houses. We came at last into the water-boulevard of the Inner Amstel, and passed out through its black flood gates into the magnificent blue expanse of the Outer Amstel. On and on we sped, beneath arches of ever-lengthening stone bridges, till the sun sank in a flaming irruption of orange mist that, mounting suddenly almost to the horizon, burnished for a few minutes the waters of the Amstel to bronze and intensified every touch of green in dyke and tree and river craft. It faded as suddenly, leaving the great water way flowing cool, dark, blue towards the east and the full rising moon.

We brought about then, and slowly, very slowly, that the illusion might be ours to the end, we made our way back into the inner waters of the Amstel. As the moon rose higher and the daylight began to fade, the façades of the warehouses darkened perceptibly, and the white bands about windows and doors showed like a ghostly handwriting along the walls of the narrowing roadstead. As its beams touched the darkening waters into brilliancy we passed from the great curve of the Amstel Within, from which one may see the city's towers and steeples rise by twos and threes against the sky, to the black narrow way of the Zwanenburgwal. We sailed on in silence beneath its dismal arches where the sound of traffic was not heard, and only the *chug-*

chug of the motor and the splash of dripping water made themselves audible. We passed coal barges blacker than our surroundings, passed floating junk shops — *kofs* laden with old iron and other city waste. We sailed on past crooked lanes of canals wholly shadowed by the coming night and the leaning gables of the old houses, and so on into the Jews' quarters and remembrance of *The Miller's Son.* Here it was that we found certain painted moods of Rembrandt van Rÿn. It was here we found the key to some of his marvellous light, and the shadow that, in Rembrandt's art, is the metamorphosis of light. At last we were seeing something of Rembrandt's Amsterdam: the Water Ghetto that grew noisy as the dusk deepened and became harsh with cries and calls.

We left it for the broad, silvered pathway of the Oude Schans. On our left the Tower of Montalban, beloved of artists, stood out against the pale night, transfigured by the moonlight into a thing of beauty as it is always a thing of grace. On, still on, we sailed to the open harbor where the forest of masts showed like a spider's web against the clear west, and the ancient Tower of Tears reminded us that this was no scenic setting arranged for a traveller's æsthetic enjoyment, but a real world-stage whereon generation after generation has played its part in the Tragedy of Life, and human prayers, human tears, human hearts and human heart-aches have followed those *that go down to the sea in ships.*

Afterwards we entered the city again to explore the

water way of the Oude Zÿds Voorburgwal and pass beneath the shadows of the Oude Kerk. We crossed the brilliant Rokin, the narrow strait of the Groenenburgwal, and took in the whole length of the Kloviniersburgwal from which one has a lovely view of the steeple of the Zuider Kerk, or South Church, part Moorish, part Italian, part Dutch, part Spanish; and just there we heard the play of its good-night chimes.

So we saw Amsterdam. So it should always be seen; for only so can one realize its full charm.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE DON QUIXOTE COUNTRY

THE Knight of La Mancha would have had his hands full if he had attempted to tilt with all the windmills between Amsterdam and Koog on the Zaan. It is pre-eminently the windmill country, and one has to adapt himself to an entirely new environment even in this land of windmills. As James said, "It is jabberwocky."

We had to accustom ourselves, after we had seen Amsterdam's towers vanish in perspective, and entered the interesting Zaan, to a new order of things in heaven and on earth. It was decidedly unsettling to see the top of a prosaic warehouse suddenly sprout a pair of gigantic wings, to become aware, after much rubbing of the eyes, that the apse of a stately church in the distance was, to all appearances, gyrating in a fantastic *pas seul*. I confess I found it startling to see a gray-thatched roof lift itself, to all appearances, with a mighty heave several feet above its own ridgepole. More than one delicate spire I saw executing a fine "drop kick."

When to these optical illusions is added the clear-visioned fact that all about are scores of windmills large and small, whirling, clicking, sawing, grinding, crushing, hoisting for all they are worth to their owners; when upon

the horizon numberless little white and gray canvas clouds are twirling in seemingly perpetual motion like automatic pinwheels; when it is seen that, in consequence, the air is filled both far and near with movement, the sky with rotating silhouettes, and the solid earth swept with shadows of long-armed sails, the reader may realize, perhaps, that a susceptible traveller in such parts is apt to find himself in a state of mind in which he questions his sanity.

But there is no monotony in this mill-land, and there is an exquisite harmony of color. One sees a gray mill, gray-thatched, white sails, and the wooden blades touched strongly with vermilion; an olive-green body, iron-rust red canvases and blades of solid white; a black buccaneer with white sails and black arms striped with bright apple-green. The combinations seem infinite, but they are always pleasing.

The mills in the various provinces vary in construction and color as widely as the costumes of the provincials. Take, for examples, the stately mill, typical of all stateliness, on the Coolvest in the business centre of Rotterdam, the Maypole of Utrecht, all curving grace, the perfect type of a country mill, the great sawmill of rugged mass, straight line and sharp angle, near Zaandam, the old five-storied mill by St. Catherine's Bridge at Haarlem, the two noble ones at Gorinchem, including *De Eendracht*, the island grainmill in far-away Zierikzee,—all these express, as it were, the dialects of

mill architecture; sails, blades, roofs, foundation, material, construction, thatching and coloring, all vary; and all together they lend to a remarkable land a charm which no other possesses.

It was a pretty sight to see the windmills put to sleep with declining day, the great arms rotating more and more slowly, the shadows on the meadows growing longer as they swept more and more lazily over the green, the almost imperceptible stopping; to see the furling of the great sails, and the miller making all fast for the night; to see him disappearing through the dark doorway high up on the encircling balcony, the closing of the door behind him, and with it the closing of the little industrial drama that is played out each day to the end; to watch, at last, the wondrously tinted twilight curtains, which belong to these northern latitudes, as they dropped upon the daily drama in this enchanted land.

CHAPTER XIX

ALKMAAR'S WEIGH HOUSE

We made a continuous voyage, after leaving the windmill country at Koog, by way of the interesting Zaan to the broad Lake of Alkmaar whereon we sailed as on the shallow waters of an inland sea. It is lonely thereabout, but not desolate, and beautiful in the long crimson lights of a brilliant sunset. Emerging from the lake we entered the North Holland Canal which runs between sparsely settled stretches of marshlands where no tree is seen, where no bird sings, where no lowing of cattle, no human note is heard at sundown between earth and sky, and made the long straight approach to Alkmaar.

At a quarter of nine we entered the haven. Behind us the night was near, and heavens and canal were darkly blue, the one a reflection of the other. Beneath and about us the waters of the narrow harbor gleamed a pomegranate pink, which is half crocus-yellow, in that wonderful afterglow. Before us the dwellings and warehouses, the steep, irregular, crowded roofs, the curiously shaped gables and the delicate spire of the Custom House stood out black against the background of a pale, saffron-tinted sky. The illustration, which shows the approach to the ancient Weigh House at Alkmaar, is

ALKMAAR'S WEIGH HOUSE

perfect in its way and serves for an intimation of what the beauty of such approaches may be when exquisite coloring enhances the reflections.

The Captain's joy in our joy was a delight to both James and me. We followed him trustfully from the wharf (there are no conveyances to meet the *Alkmaar Packet* and private *Broomsticks!*) along a roadway paved with what I call agony stones, small, sharp-angled pieces of granite or brick or stone laid closely. The way was dark with overarching trees, and after various turnings our guide brought us to an old inn, *De Toelast.* It proved a very haven of rest where, after a supper of noble proportions at ten, we took our brass candlesticks from an ancient mahogany table in the entrance hall, and climbed the steep stairs to the cozy, old-fashioned bedrooms, furnished, all of them, in solid mahogany. As usual the beds were bolstered with a slice of mattress resembling a huge wedge of cheese (James propounded the theory that the many round-shouldered men and women of the better class are the resultant of sleeping at such an angle), pillowed with two small beds, double-blanketed with Holland wool, and overlaid with a gay tufted cotton comforter the weight of which I judged to be about twenty pounds. In journeying through the Netherlands one should reckon on the time it takes to un-make and re-make the Dutch beds. One learns the routine with time and how to expedite matters, but out of every six

months one day should be counted lost in the exigencies of bed-making.

I shall not soon forget that awakening. Half the charm of foreign travel is to enter a new place under cover of night and awake early in the morning full of anticipations at prospect of the new and the unknown. At that hour all sounds are suggestive, all garden fragrances idealizing, all glimpses of the early morning sun an earnest of many joyful hours. I awoke on this special morning with the sound of the carillon dropping its music from clear, high-pitched bells. Now and then a note struck in accord with an anvil's hammer rung regularly by some harmonious blacksmith in the neighborhood. I heard the cackling of geese, the *baaing* of sheep, but afar, the bleating of lambs, not of several, but, I judged by the noise, of several hundreds. In the midst of these sounds the clocks began striking seven. I counted six in all, each following the other with unexpected irregularity. This noisy *olla podrida* proved too much for a parrot beneath my window who, straightway rousing to the fray, proceeded to imitate every known bird-call and finished with a succession of *meouws* real enough to have deceived the best intentioned cat in Alkmaar. It was time to be abroad.

While dressing I took a peep from my window at the small Dutch garden below. It was made up of two high, ivy-covered walls and a grass-patch. A laburnum tree, laden with its drooping yellow clusters, made morning

glorious in one corner, in another a magnolia was just opening its white moons. I went out into the fresh morning lights and found the town astir. In these latitudes half the work is done in the long mornings before six, and I went with the human stream. It carried me along the *Mient* — rows of fine old houses and shops bordering a kind of Grand Canal, crossed by a brick-arched Dutch Rialto, and next-door neighbor to the Weigh House — and swept me into a corner of the Market-Place. There I remained till James and the Captain found me. That human stream debouching on the Market-Place divided my interest with the Place and its contents. It was what the Dutch call *Beast Market*, for there are likewise Butter Markets, Grain Markets and Cheese Markets, all of which find their social centre in the Market Place hard by the famous Weigh House. In that one spot were gathered hundreds of farmers in long blue frocks which Mauve in his paintings has made classic. They carried the shepherd's crook, and leaned on it, hooked up lambs with it, restrained headstrong rams and lined up straying goats with it. They made their slow gesticulations of approval or dissent with it, and, for aught I know, bargained with it. It was the bishop's crozier democratized. A man's gathering truly, and typical of man's occupation from Abraham down.

I have never seen such flocks of long-wooled sheep, both ewes and rams, not even on English downs, nor such herds of milk-white goats, with hair like spun silk.

The fathers of the latter were clean-limbed, thin-necked, large-eyed, the mothers delicate creatures with large full pink udders; the spotless kids worthy to be apotheosized by a Jan Steen or a Van Ostade. The Market Place was filled with the white beasts, the boats moving along the canal were white with them; the arms of small boys full of them as they aided the protesting ones by hoisting the hind legs and running them on their two forefeet along the narrow walk or gang-plank towards the pens. I discovered a fact, which is doubtless well known to the initiated, that, as a horse's pace is set by the reach of his hind legs, so an innocent goat's power of resistance lies in his haunches. Deprive him of these, and you have the ludicrous process of forced locomotion which I saw all through North Holland.

There is no denying it — the centre of attraction at Alkmaar is its Markets, and Market Place dominated by the ancient Weigh House, and approached by the two picturesque canals that border the Mient and Luttik Oudorp.

Like many another Dutch town Alkmaar has had its memorable siege and covered itself with the glory of a brave resistance. It has its Great Church that lost its tower four hundred years ago, which shows it to be in sympathy with a hundred other churches in a like plight. Indeed, there would seem to be scarce an Old Church or Great Church, Abbey or Cathedral in Holland, the tower of which has not tumbled down in some

past century, which has not lost a nave, as at Utrecht, or an apse, a roof, or perchance itself, as at Amersfoort, in some disaster caused by wind, subsidence, fire or floods. It has a really beautiful Stadhuis and a "wood," a weak imitation of Haarlem. It has, also, for suburban neighbors, proud Egmond aan Zee and Egmond op den Hoef and Egmond-Binnen; it will not let you forget its great names.

But when all is said and all is read — as read it may be from Motley to De Amicis — it is the beautiful old Weigh House, reflected in the tree-fringed canal by the Luttik Oudorp and presiding over the busy mart and the human throng which fills it, that draws us to Alkmaar and holds us there. It is the human life, also, that foregathers here on market days: the men in the long blue frocks, crook in hand, and their wives and daughters, charming each, whether young, middle-aged or old, in her neat costume and rich headgear, topped by a truncated cone of a yellow straw bonnet. The delicate gold band half an inch wide that is worn on the forehead is wrought with all the cunning and almost genius of the goldsmith's art in finest filigree. An unmarried woman wears the band across the left temple; it extends to the middle of the forehead. A married woman wears hers on the right. They are caught beneath the dainty embroidered cap, and fastened to a broad gold band beneath it by long gold pins the heads of which, projecting over each temple, are either

exquisitely chased, wrought in relief, or made in filigree.

One may see hundreds of these bright, fresh faces, framed in their caps and rich headgear, on the Mient where they make their purchases. One will find them in the silversmiths' shops buying the silver chains, the bracelets, the buttons for everyday wear. For they are rich, rich beyond telling, these plain-spoken, kindly people of North Holland, and the Market is their bourse. Like the ancient unvitiated Romans they find their riches in the barter and exchange of their *pecunia;* hence their satisfactory pecuniary condition.

We stood with a small group of peasants by the drawbridge over the canal by the Luttik Oudorp and listened to the carillon in the Weigh House steeple at twelve of noon. It played unheeded by the busy hundreds who were bargaining sheep and goats, nor separating one from the other. But, when the bell boomed its dozen strokes, and the famous little knights on their mimic platform beneath the clock caracoled gaily and doughtily back and forth, in and out in mock tourney, there was a moment's lull in the murmur of tongues, and more than one sunburned, strong-lined peasant face was raised to this mimic Pantomime of the Ages acted to the life so far above their heads. We are children, all.

CHAPTER XX

AN INTERNATIONAL COMPLICATION

THE Captain took advantage while at Alkmaar of its vicinity to Egmond aan Zee to pay a day's visit to a friend there, promising to rejoin us later when he should have his three weeks' furlough. James and I went by train to Hoorn, having given orders to *The Broomstick's* owner, the "nephew-captain" as we called him, to pick us up at that port. We followed this plan for two reasons: we wished to keep that perfect approach to Alkmaar free from anti-climax by avoiding the monotonous back-door water ways between Alkmaar and Hoorn; and we wanted to enter Hoorn by its inimitable port.

In the present age the traveller in the Netherlands must search far and wide, must in some instances mine for the remaining bits of genuine old Dutch setting in those havens, towns and hamlets which have been the delight as well as the despair of generations of artists. The Old Time is passing all too quickly in the presence of the inundating flood of the New which is pressing with overwhelming force against the various barriers and dykes, social, industrial, commercial and political, that for so long have guarded the homogeneous interests

of the Dutch, and preserved intact the individuality of their water ways, towns and cities. Everywhere one can see that the Holland that Was is rapidly passing. In fifteen years, I venture to predict, a place like the Port of Hoorn, if preserved at all, will be one of the rare Meccas for all lovers of the old, inimitable Dutch life.

All over this land there has been subsidence and consequent leanings and totterings of noble towers and ancient walls. Note the list of the Old Church Tower at Delft; it is one of many. All over the land there is a constant rehabilitating process and its corollary, constant tearing down. One canal after another is filled in and becomes a barren space planted with young trees, or grassed over and set with flower-beds. The approaches to Weigh Houses, Fish Bridges, Market Places are, many of them, choked with sand in the same way, and the old landmarks are left stranded high and dry, looking lonely and out of place, in the midst of architectural incongruity. Ramparts have become shaded boulevards noisy with electric tram, or as *wals*, the Dutch word for the same, are converted into broad thoroughfares like the *Nieuwe Zÿds Voorburgwal* in Amsterdam, which the illustration facing page 169 shows in its own, old, dark beauty. Home after home is being torn down either because the walls have been weakened by age, or in order to make room for new business blocks. The railway stations, which may be considered almost without the limits of city and town,

and farthest distant from the water way traffic, will soon be centres for the new sections which are springing up in their neighborhood, hopelessly new, although lovely, with no single feature to connect them with the Holland that was. One almost fails to recognize on the walls of the galleries in paintings, etchings, or drawings of a generation since many of the present localities once so famous for their unique beauty. Small wonder we wanted to see Hoorn!

I took the opportunity, on the short train ride, to speak of my "tale" which I had been longing to unfold ever since we left Leyden. I approached the subject in a roundabout way.

"You're queer, James."

"As how?" He was looking out of the window at an uninteresting stretch of country and did not turn his head.

"You've never said one word about what you must have known I've been longing to tell you ever since we were in Leyden."

"I knew if I waited long enough you would tell me of your own accord." This remark was so true I had no response ready. I tried another tack.

"Don't you want to know?"

"That depends."

"On what?"

"On what it is."

"Well, how are you going to know whether you want to know or not, unless you know what it is?"

"I don't — I mean, I'm not."

"Now, James, you're not listening to a word I say. Will you look at me?"

"That depends."

"On what?"

"On whether you're going to help me out of the scrape your enthusiasm got me into."

"Scrape? There, I knew something was bothering you!" I exclaimed, triumphantly. "Out with it."

"You tell first." He turned to me then with such a whimsically perplexed and half-irritated look in those handsome eyes of his that I was moved to comfort him with something more substantial than words, but I refrained, for too much was at stake. Instead, I made a self-sacrifice

"No, James, you tell me. Mine can wait."

"That is just the trouble. If you hadn't lain low so long with your information, there wouldn't be such a complication now."

"Why, what is the matter, James? *Did* you know that Cousins Lou and Lois were going to join us as soon as they can? Really I couldn't say no to them; they are wild to see Holland." I knew I was giving in "all along the line," but James' tone and use of the word "complication" made me desperate.

"I suspected it from your actions," he replied.

"My actions!" I echoed in amazement. "I was not aware that I had comported myself otherwise than usual."

"Yes, your actions. You've been smiling to yourself in off moments, and mooning by yourself by the taffrail. Yesterday you encouraged the Captain to quote Dutch poetry for you although you couldn't understand five words out of ten. I know the signs," he said emphatically and with an increasing earnestness which bordered dangerously on severity; "you're planning a match." I felt the challenge conveyed in his manner and promptly accepted it.

"What if I am?" I demanded with an earnestness that matched his. I confess I resent at times too much mental telepathy between James and me. It is all well enough to be "one in soul," but this having "a single thought" is not always reassuring. "I shouldn't be a woman if I didn't enjoy match-making, even in Holland, where it's damp enough to quench all the smoking flax of sentiment the world contains. You know yourself that Lois is captivating — everybody finds her so. And she must be married sometime: it's her destiny as it was mine."

"Umph! Which one have you settled on?"

"Really, James, this is premature. I'm not a friend of international marriages — but who knows? If the Captain should prove as charming to others as he has to us —"

"Look here, Persis, now I'll have no nonsense. I'm in a deuce of a fix with Ben."

"What about Ben?" I tried to ask innocently, but

my husband read me — oh, read me through and through!

"What about Ben?" (I do love to see James roused to righteous indignation; it is so becoming to his eyes. I tell him so afterwards.) "You know well enough what about Ben. Didn't you do all in your power last winter to throw those two together? And didn't I tell you you were playing with fire?"

"Where was the harm? Nobody was burnt that I know of; and Ben is such a splendid fellow he deserves some one as lovely as Lois —"

"And now you propose to throw the Captain into the same net, and let her play with both fellows at the same time! Umph!"

"But Ben escaped apparently harmless for all I know. How about Lois? My sympathies are with the woman every time."

"They are, are they?" It was the nearest approach to a sneer I had ever heard in James' voice. "Lois can take care of herself; but here is a letter which Ben wrote before he cablegraphed and it has just been forwarded. It will prove an eye-opener even to you, if I'm not mistaken. The truth is Lois has turned him down, and if she is my cousin, I'll give her a piece of my mind when I see her. Ben's my friend, and I won't have him fooled with by any of my blood."

"Oh, James!" I confess I was appalled at the result of my winter's manœuvring and the consequence of my

rashly enthusiastic invitation to the girls. I call them that although, as I said, Cousin Lou is forty if she's a day.

"Yes, and what is more he writes me here that he's coming to be with us, alone — and forget it! He isn't going to do things by halves if he has been jilted by a girl with no conscience and little heart. I'll tell him he's well rid of her."

"Oh, James!"

"Yes, and you've been planning to throw those two together again over here and use the Captain as a foil —"

"Oh, James!"

"Yes, and I won't have Ben, or the Captain either, used in any such way. Ben has enough backbone to stand up to it all right on *The Broomstick's* deck; and the Captain is an all-round fine man. But these foreigners are mighty free with their pistols, especially the army men, and the first we know there'll be a nice little duel in the Haarlem woods, and as a result international complications of a mighty unpleasant sort for us all." He spoke moodily.

"Oh, James! I'll write to-night and tell them not to come; the letter will reach them at Lucerne —"

He interrupted me. "You'll do nothing of the sort. Let them come on now — the more the merrier," he added, grimly, "as we're in for it. I'm not going to have you make matters worse by intimating to the girl that Ben is so hard hit he can't bear her presence, not much! But I'll guarantee Ben can stand it if she can. You let

things alone now. Persis, — you haven't said a word about Ben's coming to us, have you?" he demanded with sudden suspicion.

"Not a word; not a hint, even."

"All the better for you," he grumbled. Then, with a twitch of his upper lip which is a sure sign of returning good humor with himself and his other half, he added: "You can write them to meet us at Dordrecht. We'll take Ben on at Nÿmegen. I propose to let the surprise party be on Miss Lois' side rather than Ben's."

"Just as you say, James," I answered, meekly. Whereupon he smiled in what I thought a peculiar manner.

When James is masterful I am always submissive, outwardly. In the present case I realized the gravity of this small international complication that confronted us and threatened to spoil our inward and outward harmony while in the Netherlands. But I kept my fears to myself and trusted to my intuitions, as a woman will when driven to the wall by an over-logical husband. These led me to conclusions diametrically opposed to those which James had reached along his line of reasoning; but he was in no mood to hear them just then, and I welcomed the sound of "Hoorn" from the guards. I felt sure the new environment was needed to distract his mind and turn his thoughts from this unexpected complication of the nations.

CHAPTER XXI

THE PORT OF HOORN

It has been my experience that when a man looks at a serious small matter through his strongest pessimistic glasses, he sees it in black, jet-black, without any relief from any quarter of the universe. This is especially true if his vision be colored at that moment by a sense of vacuity in the inner man, and a feeling of personal injury that a belated lunch or dinner is apt to produce. Profiting by my experience I led the way, without any preliminaries, from the station straight across the shaded green to a modest-looking house which bore the enigmatical name of *The Curry Comb.*

I count *The Curry Comb* as one of my most delightful "finds," worthy to be incorporated and memorialized in that inimitable pamphlet, *Noord Holland.* It stands, appropriately, between the stables and Cattle Market. We were isolated in the state front room, the windows of which looked out upon a large Place, backed by a dignified *remise* and, at that hour, just at the close of the market, filled with vehicles of all descriptions. It was again Beast Market day, and every town and hamlet in the country-side had sent its quota of sheep, its phalanx of stolid farmers with their *vrouws*, its bevy of

gay youths and maidens to attend it. The men were harnessing splendid specimens of North Holland's famous breed of horses into high, two-wheeled calashes, into huge, bright blue sheep carts as long as a Main *jigger*, into low, curving wooden galleons on wheels, dash-boards, sides, and back-boards beautifully carved. These Dutch schooners, which may be counted by the hundreds on market-day, are extremely graceful in shape, and their white hoods form an incomparable frame for the rosy, smiling faces, dainty caps, glittering head-pieces, silver chains and châtelaines, for the gay bodices and snow-white tuckers of the farmers' wives and daughters whose buxom figures, plus their amplitude of petticoat, fill the vehicles to overflowing.

It was a pretty sight to watch the merry departures, and gladsome to hear the fun and laughter attendant upon each. The horses looked to be richly caparisoned in shining leather and brass harness, banded with white sheep's wool about the withers to prevent chafing. Coal black mares, glossy-coated and round-haunched, reared and pranced and caracoled in tune with the festive time and place. At such seasons one may see something of Dutch country life at its best.

While waiting for our dinner, we looked into the back room where at a long table two score or more of the elders of the land were having a substantial after-market meal. The dressers were loaded with good things. Silver *guldens*, *kwartjes*, *dubbeltjes*, *stuivers* —

the small five-cent Dutch silver piece, that is rarely found in city exchange — were keeping up a kind of running accompaniment to the tinkling of glasses; otherwise there was nothing to be heard but the evidence of strict attention to the business in hand. The Dutch accept their chief meal with gravity and a species of stolid earnestness that does not encourage jest.

Our own dinner proved satisfactory in every respect: a tender, juicy beefsteak smothered in potatoes and onions, new garden beans, white and gray bread with delicious butter. It was not an order; we simply took what was set before us. As a general rule we found this method of procedure in the smaller inns most satisfactory. The Dutch host was not put out of countenance by any demand on our part to provide the products of the American market, or the *cuisine* of a Delmonico. James, quoting, or rather paraphrasing, to suit the occasion, that pregnant sentence from *A Sentimental Journey*, "An Englishman does not travel to see Englishmen," used to remind himself and me, at least once a week, *that an American does not travel in the Netherlands to find America.* With this in mind, we found ourselves well kept, well served, well fed — with but one exception — throughout the Netherlands. The smaller towns and villages can boast of inns and a homely hospitality which no New England village of the same size can offer to a traveller. Our section of

the country, at least, might well learn a lesson in this respect from the Dutch.

After dinner our host caused to be rolled out of the adjoining *remise* a fête-day barouche of Hoorn. It was an *édition de luxe* of a barouche, upholstered in down, and heavy satin of a delicate pearl-gray. I am convinced the little Queen, or her Queen Mother, must have used it as a state conveyance on some rare visit to the town. It looked like the trappings of royalty; it felt like the "seats of the mighty." We were burdened with such state, and seemed much out of place as we drove about the ancient capital of North Holland. It would have suited our democratic taste to have driven in one of those charming Dutch galleons; but this particular expression of hospitality on our landlord's part was too perfect to be ignored.

We were shown the sights of Hoorn: the mosaic of a Stadhuis, the brick and stone façade of which, to all appearances, faces both ways. The roof is obliged to reconcile itself to this architectural freak by an ornamental angle of jointure. The effect of the whole is pleasing by reason of its well-balanced oddity and the richness of mosaic. We were taken to the old hospital of St. Jan, and the Museum built of gray stone. Its high stepped gable looks like a rampant corner of a Zoölogical Garden, it has so many sculptured lions — one posing defiantly on every step. We were driven through the narrow streets which, much to our con-

THE PORT OF HOORN

UNIV. MICH.

fusion and the inhabitants' amusement, our royal coach filled from wall to wall, and upon whose tiny gabled houses our coachman, in his tall, parade hat, looked down from his high seat. Even the children were obliged to back into doorways to permit our passing without accident, and the beautiful little houses, mosaics of sculptured gray stone, or carved wood, and brick of a warm, seasoned red, were almost within our reach.

But it was when we had finished with the "sights" and descended from our state equipage that we began to be really happy in Hoorn. James said his democratic *shanks' mare* was good enough for him in so small a place, and with these steeds we hied us without delay to the ancient Port. There, sitting on the quay, we drew a long satisfied breath — we were facing another realized ideal!

In artistic charm I associate this port, its approach and surroundings, with Gorinchem on the Merwede and Veere on the island of Walcheren, utterly unlike as are all three.

Picture a spacious haven, and beyond it a narrow port of entry, irregular in form, filled, not only with small sailing-craft of every kind, but, to all appearances, with houses, trees, drawbridges, warehouses, country carts, fish-nets, rigging, fish-creels, piles of cheeses and quintals of fish — the whole watched over by an indescribable Tower, the principal Gate of Hoorn, that nearly wets its foot in the waters of the haven.

This chief Tower-Gate is all unexpected gables, and tiny unintentional dormer windows breaking out in the most surprising spots on the steep-gabled roofs. The structure is rounded behind like the apse of a cathedral, and flat before like the rigid *Bargello* in Florence, but shows everywhere a florescence of lovely cornice, windows, and sculpture. It is a Tower that at every angle of view presents a different face. It is topped by an exquisite and audaciously aspiring steeple which is the proud possessor of a clock-tower, belfry, lookout and, far aloft, a weather-vane ship. Add to these details of construction a coloring at once rich, subdued, and harmonious, the dignity of a noble architecture of a noble age, the grace that every stone gathers with the weathering of centuries, and you may form a concept, colorless as compared with the actual, of this Tower that for so long has guarded the inimitable Port of Hoorn.

The setting of this Tower-Gate presents a fascinating conglomerate, and it is impossible to say at first where the streets and land end, and the wharves and waters begin; whether the drawbridge be an isthmus or strait; whether the piles of cheeses lie on docks or decks; whether the sailors are splicing their rigging or mending their nets; whether the lower story of the Tower is shadowed by adjacent trees or by a huge brown sail that seems inextricably entangled among them. With the lifting of the drawbridge it seemed as if some cataclysm of subsidence must ensue and houses, trees, ships disappear from sight.

I believe if every copy of the Bible in the Netherlands were to be destroyed, that much of its contents might still be read written in wood and stone, on silver and gold, on brass, bronze, and iron throughout the length and breadth of the Low Countries. We find it everywhere: on houses, lintels, doors, gates, towers, churches, choirs, stalls, pulpits, screens, bells, pails, bread-boards, knife-handles, mangling-boards. So here at Hoorn. On the rounded side of the Gate towards the haven is cut in stone, *Matthew vii. 13. — Enter ye in at the strait gate.* The conclusion in this case is hardly obvious as a decree of fate. It would seem that, in the Port of Hoorn, this special strait gate and narrow way, far from leading to life, might well, without the caution of a particularly knowing skipper, court destruction.

About two hours before sunset we watched for the coming of *The Broomstick.* It impressed us as particularly appropriate that *our* boat, with its honored and honoring symbol of victory, should make a proud entry into this special port. As every reader of a book on Holland knows, Admiral Martin Tromp, who nailed the historical broomstick to his masthead, levied many of the ships that formed his famous fighting fleet at Hoorn. We pleased ourselves, also, as Americans, dwellers on another continent, in the knowledge that our two great Americas, washed by the waters of three oceans, should be linked historically to this little Port of Hoorn touched only by the waves of the Zuider Zee! Willem Schouten,

born here, rounded the famous cape in 1616, and named it after his native town.

We watched with full-blown American pride for the entrance of our boat. We congratulated ourselves that no other Americans had ever sat on the coping of the old quay anticipating the entry of their own Dutch *Broomstick*. We were lingering on these heights of patriotic and egotistic sentiment when we beheld that worthy craft suddenly heave into sight almost under our very noses. Evidently she was making what seemed to be a supreme effort to round the Tower and double the trunk of a tree just in front of us, without fouling the drawbridge and running down two scows laden with cabbages.

Willem Schouten's efforts to double the renowned Cape could never have required greater nicety of calculation, nor more persistent struggle. Our nephew-captain and his uncle, our first and only mate, Cornelis Does, were poling and fending with desperate earnestness. Our *vrouw*, Neeltje, was at the helm. Her usually placid face wore such an unwonted, ruffled look that it amounted to an actual disfigurement. Her very cap-flaps, wide as an elephant's ears, were limp, and a distracting and distracted mongrel cur, part dachshund, part terrier, — an addition to our crew, I at once perceived, since leaving Alkmaar — was racing like mad from stem to stern and filling the peaceful air of the Port with mongrel yelps.

An ignominious entrance for the second *Broomstick!*

I was glad no Admiral Van Tromp was there to witness it; even James expressed his relief that he had ordered the Stars and Stripes hauled down in our absence. He caught at the line, lent a hand, and helped to make our boat fast to a convenient pile. Then we entered into our own — the mongrel cur, meanwhile, barking furiously from the extreme peak of the prow, where he stood like an animated figurehead, forefeet stemmed, tail straight and quivering, body jerking as if with automatic wires, and vociferously proclaiming himself master of the situation.

It is, perhaps, needless to say that we adopted him on the spot in order to keep him quiet, and prevent our crew from striking. In Holland a boat without a dog-attachment is as anomalous and unpopular as a sewing-machine without an automatic tension. Both James and I knew there had been some dissatisfaction among the crew, but, up to the moment when the dog announced himself, had failed to find a cause.

CHAPTER XXII

AN ANCIENT OF DAYS

"Of de kronen
Luister toonen,
Vorsten, staaten bloeimend staan,
Langer stonde
Duurt hun ronde
Maar hun avond spoedt toch aan."

So runs a verse of a Dutch poem. In the original it is comparable in music of rhythm, perfection of rhyme, beauty of expression and depth of sentiment with Goethe's famous

"Ueber allen Gipfeln
Ist Ruh."

I know of no greater praise. The following is a free translation:

Crowns may gleam
With jewelled beam,
States may thrive and princely race,
One long hour
Lasts their power,
But their evening comes apace.

It was in Friesland I read this. It is in Friesland one may feel its truth.

Short as the voyage was across the Zuider Zee it seemed to bring us to a foreign shore — and to us a physical sense of *northernness*. We left the Port of Hoorn behind us, and presently on the left the towers of Enkuizen rose like those of a dream city from out the very waves themselves. Its fishing fleet was abroad that day, and James counted two hundred *pinken* all about us and afar on the horizon. In the evening light the Zuider Zee is remarkable for the clarity of its delicate coloring, an effect, possibly, of its shallow waters. There is a canvas by Mesdag in his museum that shows this. On that evening pale green predominated. The sea, being smooth, showed like a pavement of chrysoprase, on which the black hulls of such of the fleet as were at anchor rested motionless. Here and there a sail caught the pale sunlight, and on all sides the severe grace of spar and rigging was etched into a soft blue-gray sky.

Poor Stavoren! As we approached its desolate pier we realized that all our reading about this ancient, uncrowned land had not prepared us for the actual and complete effacement of its royalty. The one unfailingly silent witness of its downfall surrounded us — the calm waters of the Zuider Zee.

This sea tells no tales. It brings no message from the villages buried deep beneath its sands. Its rising tides do

not whisper of that great Forest of Kreyl overwhelmed by the engulfing flood in that terrible thirteenth century, and now petrifying in its ooze. I could but wonder whether another horror of elemental convulsion might not upheave this sunken forest and scatter the gum and resin of its ancient trees as amber on some new-made shore. If ever the great sea be drained, and the project has been long under consideration, the menace to the land will still be as great. Elemental power can frustrate any work of man, and the fearful nights of March 12th, and 13th, of this year demonstrated the futility of dependence on the dykes. So long as the German Ocean is subject to a conjunction of northwest winds and high tides, so long as its boisterous waters possess but the narrow outlet of Calais Straits, just so long will it threaten the continuance of the Netherlands as a geographical unit and a geological entity.

Stavoren's "hour" of royalty was approximately a thousand years long, then its glory departed never to return. In the fourth and fifth century it was flourishing with its gladiatorial shows, its theatres and circus borrowed from the Romans. It fraternized by means of reciprocity treaties not only with the Romans, but in due time with Batavians, Danes, Germans, and Franks. In comparison with Stavoren's age, royalty, and ancient glory, Amsterdam is a *parvenu*, The Hague is a spoiled infant of modern times, even Nÿmegen, the Little Rome of eastern Gelderland, is a youth of Charlemagne's time.

Rome, the Rome of the Cæsars, is Ancient Frisia's contemporary, her enemy at first, and in the end her stout ally. It seems preëminently fitting that the royal governing house in the Netherlands should trace its descent from her ancient kings; most fitting that the lions in Friesland's ancient arms should show as royal lions in the arms of the House of Orange-Nassau.

We left the lonely town and journeyed for about twenty miles through lonely coastlands that, in the long geological ages and the short Age of Man, have risen and subsided time and time again, that have lain for æons as sea bottom in order now for a short time, a time dependent on the caprice of the ever-threatening North Sea, to show their lone green stretches beyond the protecting dykes. The slow twilight was falling upon a day that had been filled with that wondrous, pensive atmosphere which James calls North Holland's "half-and-half" light. In the distance, beyond the dreary stretch of dyke, a white sail was moving through the tall rush-like grass. There were no sheep, no cattle, no windmills, no water visible to give life and movement to the landscape. The gray arch of sky for one hundred and eighty degrees was unflecked by a bird. Once I saw a stork rise from the marshes and fly low over the green waste; that was all. But the charm was great because enhanced by Friesland's history: kingly crowns, royal states, princely race — for them all, as for the land itself, this Ancient of Days, "*their evening comes apace.*"

CHAPTER XXIII

A FRISIAN PARIS

THE country changed its face on leaving the coastlands for Leeuwarden. Rich farms joined richer farms with every mile that brought us nearer to the Frisian capital. Farmhouses like royal rustic *Petits Trianons* proclaimed from their very housetops, gay with rich mosaic tiling, the wealth of their owners. Under the ponderous roof live man and beast. The lush grass grows up to the very doors, and there is no litter about, nothing visible of the usual farm-waste, no straggling paths, no underbrush, no "lean-to" — only one massive dwelling set in a perfectly ordered grass plot, and surrounded by a perfectly ordered square or rectangle of farm lands, the various fields separated by ditches filled with clear water.

These rustic mansions, for they are nothing less, are, many of them, beautiful in coloring, although bare of setting. There are few trees, and not many flowers, about them. I saw one which may serve as a sample of the colors used. It was of maroon-colored brick. Its ponderous roof, with low-hanging eaves, was gray-thatched, the thatch as sleek as an antelope's hide. About the huge dormer windows was set a border, perhaps four feet wide, of beautifully glazed red and yellow tiles.

This tiling is highly ornamental, and used for the better class of houses.

In the fields, knee-deep in grass, a thousand cattle were gathering in groups near the ditches. It was milking time, and everywhere we saw, as we saw afterwards in Gelderland, the originals of those paintings by Anton Mauve, that make their appeal through their subjectivity. The men in blue linen jackets, of which blue Mauve makes almost as much as Vermeer of Delft of his predilection for that color, were busy with the cattle. The great splendid creatures yielded their marvellous flow of milk from such distended udders that sixty quarts a day seemed no longer an "old wife's tale" to us. In point of fact, I was ready to accept any tale of Dutch fecundity and production, after seeing what we saw all about Leeuwarden which is the chief cattle market of Friesland. Large cans, painted bright blue or red, which hold, I should judge, about fifty gallons, were trundled about on gay little hand-carts from one lovely Holstein group — fit subject for a Paul Potter — to another, until all the clusters in the galaxy of this very real Milky Way had been visited. Then the carts were trundled off to the, many times, distant farmhouse. The cattle kept together for a while, ruminating in their twilight way; then, snuffing up the sweet, moist evening air, they bent their noble heads to the deep pasturage, and began again that strange natural process by which man is helped to live.

It was something of a shock, so far as a sentiment for what James designates *rurality* is concerned, to find ourselves, after an hour and a half of this country idyl, in a modern hotel 'bus, rattling through the brilliantly-lighted streets of Leeuwarden at half-past eight. The jar of the shock was comfortably lessened upon our entrance into a stately old inn, ablaze with lights, and our taking possession of bedrooms that were as ample as a modern drawing-room, and infinitely more comfortable. The effect of the shock was further diminished by a substantial late dinner. Somehow, the Dutch landlords manage to have a most satisfactory dinner served at any hour of the evening, not, of course, *à la carte*. The dining-room recalled those seen in Italian hotels some twenty years ago. It was high-studded, twenty feet perhaps, panelled from floor to ceiling, and severely plain but rich in its furnishings. The windows were glass doors, opening upon a small but charming garden.

We went out afterwards into the gay brightness of the streets. There we found regular *boulevardiers* and *boulevardières*, together with crowds of Frisian beaux and belles, promenading, chatting, laughing, and enjoying themselves generally. The rows of shops along the principal streets bordering canals were brilliantly lighted and filled with attractive wares. The city was doubly illuminated, for the bright lights were everywhere reflected in the black waters of the canals. The life, the movement, the gaiety, the broad streets, the shaded avenues,

the many gas jets—all reminded us of Paris. It is the only reminder, seen as we saw it, in all the Netherlands; for the crowds of sombre mood that pace of an evening up and down the dimly-lighted narrow Lange Poten at The Hague, and the stream of stolid elbowers along Kalver Straat in Amsterdam, have nothing in common with the gay promenaders in Friesland's capital. It is a miniature Paris, and its women are so pretty! James said he had seen more handsome women in one half hour that evening than he had seen during our entire winter in The Hague.

To the glitter and brightness of the shop windows, the lighted streets and the illumined waters, add the gleam, beneath dainty lace caps, of the rich silver and gold helmets that crown the lovely pink and white of girls' merry faces, and the flash of jewelled gold chains that cross the smooth foreheads from one temple to the other; then one may form an idea of the species of spectacular transformation to which our ideas were subjected after leaving poor, forsaken Stavoren, only to find this Little Paris in the far north of the Netherlands!

We went to Leeuwarden with two objects in view: to visit the famous Frisian Museum of Antiquities, and to see my *Great Tower*, an etching of which hangs above my book shelves at home; a reproduction of it may be seen in the frontispiece.

The Frisian Museum of Antiquities is *sui generis*. It,

together with the museum at Middelburg on the island of Walcheren, form a record of the history of this land from the time of the Cæsars until the present. Two such collections, well studied, are worth more as historical object lessons than all the other museums put together throughout the Netherlands. The museum in Leeuwarden is alone worth the journey from The Hague thither. Ancient Dutch living-rooms — the Hindeloopen rooms — furnished in their gloriously stiff manner, memorial stones, wood-carvings, coins and medals, old prints, an unequalled collection of Old Delft porcelains, ancient costumes, antique bronzes, silver and gold work, and Roman antiquities present an object lesson which cannot be learned elsewhere.

In all these we read History written in capital letters: the history of conquest, the history of defense, the history of the home, the history of the altar, the history of every industry connected with the land, the history of men and women, patriots all. This land has had its stone age, its bronze and iron age, its age of commerce with Rome, with Merovingians and Carlovingians, with Anglo-Saxons, with Germans, with the Franks. In comparatively modern times it had its Spanish occupation, and in the last century its French yoke.

It would seem, from some of the contents of this museum, that a Dutchman has continued to memorialize himself from time immemorial, and not only himself, but his deeds, his profession, his trade, his seasons of

feast, his times of famine, his birth, his betrothal, his marriage plus his silver wedding, his archery-club fines, his anniversaries, his town, his province and country. He goes farther; he memorializes the Fathers of the City Council, the meeting of the Diet, the crucial moments in his country's history, his nobility, his workingmen, the very beggars on his streets, his own emotions, when they come to the surface, his fire-engines and conflagrations, and the introduction of his city-water. He memorializes the dead, and, doubtless, would memorialize his own death if he could. For aught I know, he makes provision for this in his will. It is a national trait that may be characterized as a national "fad," antedating the tulip, poultry, and antiquity fads.

The expression of this memorializing mania may be found all over the Netherlands in two forms: in the so-called corporation-pieces and portraits of the individual, and in the striking of medals and the coining of *penningen*. These "pennies" are generally in copper, but are found in silver and gold, as well as in lead, tin, and paper. Even the monks of olden times had their "travel-penny" — a kind of free circular Cook's excursion ticket, I take it.

The siege of Alkmaar was memorialized in tin and lead pennies; the siege of Leyden in paper. Haarlem's memorial bears this inscription: *Haarlem besieged by the tyrant Alva has in her great need coined this money.*

On a "Beggars' Penny" we find: *In all things loyal to*

the King, even to the carrying of a beggar's wallet. On a "Carpenters' Penny":

Josephus was a carpenter mild,
This penny is in the carpenter's guild.

But for the land's Greatest — its artists and scholars and men of deeds, *no*, there are too few. One there is, memorializing the monument erected to Rembrandt, which bears this inscription: *Among them all he shone resplendent.* The Dutch vision is restricted to the objective, and the objective focusses the Dutchman and the interests that touch him personally.

Take the Guild Pennies alone; they show the industries of the land. These were generally of copper, and given to the brotherhood as proof of their membership. The following list in the Museum will show conclusively that ancient Frisia was in the very vanguard of industrialism before the Pilgrim Fathers ever thought of seeking positions in the workshops of Leyden: Archers, butchers, bakers, smiths, coopers, knifemakers, carpenters, surgeons, lockmakers, barbers, shoemakers, tailors, hoodmakers, coffee-pourers, hour-glass makers, trekschuit-skippers, ferrymen, linen-weavers, sheep-shearers, skippers, ship-carpenters, turf-carriers, button-makers, masons.

In a church at Hempen the panels of the pulpit are ornamented with carvings representing these so-called

"peasants' coats-of-arms." It becomes a matter of sociological interest and question, when one sees side by side with the arms of these industrial noblemen the escutcheon of some noble family with an engrafted Lily of France and the inference, which is, in one case at least, expressed in words: *They toil not neither do they spin.*

But how some one must have toiled and spun to clothe these ancient Frisians in their almost literal cloth of gold! The costumes of the Spanish occupation are marvels in their way, and an ironical commentary on Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*. Of the most ancient Frisian costume nothing remains in the dress of the people of to-day. Free and independent Frisia, when once it had felt the yoke of Saxon and Burgundian, clothed itself in sombre black and white, allowing only the long gold chains for ornament.

Friesland lost her independence in 1498. At that time, upon the appearance of Saxons and Burgundians, the red and brown in the costumes gave place to black — velvet cap with feather, close-fitting black waistcoat, heavy gold chains on the breast, long black silk breeches, and black pointed shoes. The women, too, were in black with girdles and bracelets of gold. About this time there came into fashion those voluminous balloon-like trousers, *bloomers* in earnest, gathered at the knee, of which the Urk fisherman's nether garments must be lineal descendants. Once when I was leaving Amsterdam some of these fishers, with yards of drapery for

ordinary trousers, were with me on the small boat. I could well understand, after seeing these garments at close range, that the clergy of old took the field against the excessive amplitude of the same and threatened Heaven's vengeance upon the wearers. The preaching, however, was in vain. On good authority it is stated that the *Water Beggars* of Zeeland — the terror of the Spaniards on the sea — were thus costumed.

Upon the Saxon followed the Spanish occupation, and all was changed; and what a change! The Spanish stamp upon the Netherlands remains indelible. It may still be seen on the towers, steeples and gateways, and in the costumes of Friesland and Zeeland, including Zeeland-Flanders. One is tempted, as one stands before the *Night Watch* in the Rÿks at Amsterdam, or the masterpieces of Frans Hals in Haarlem, and watches the play of light and color in silk and velvet, cord and tassels, gold chains and rings set with costly jewels, when one sees the flash of emerald and ruby, the glitter of gold, the sheen of silk, the bloom of Utrecht velvet, the lustre of pearl, the delicacy of richest lace, the long gloves exquisitely embroidered — a sign among the gentry of "non-activity," to ask: *Without the Spaniard, would there have been a Rembrandt?* For all these material things of life helped to give us the Master.

The "finds" throughout the province have been many and rich. The coins found show very clearly the historical strata of the land: Gallic, Roman, Anglo-Saxon,

Norman, German, Spanish, Republic of Holland, French, and now the United Provinces of the Netherlands. They have been found by the hundreds, I dare say, by the thousands. The terror of invasion was brought home to us when we saw these treasures, hall-marks of a two-thousand years of existence, that have been exhumed from the grounds of long-fallen monasteries and castles, from old mounds, ditches, from morass and heath, and from beneath the roots of old trees. The oldest of these dates from 200 B.C.

Before leaving the subject of the Museum, I must record one laughable, if irritating, incident. We were looking at the masterpieces of the collection: two large salvers of beaten silver, marvellous both in design and workmanship. The subjects are taken from "heathendom," as the Dutch express it, and the work seems to antedate—although this is an inference of my own—the world-renowned Hildesheim "find," the Roman silver service now in Berlin.

These dishes are labelled in the catalogue: *Artistic dishes of beaten silver for which an American has offered in vain* 100,000 *florins*. Note the *in vain!* Upon seeing this James groaned outwardly, and I inwardly. The American dollar has become, even to these far-away cousins in Friesland, the hall-mark of an American. The pity of it!

After all, the great failing of the Dutch—when I write that word I wonder I dare call it that, knowing

their wonderful history — is their self-sufficiency. Yet, curiously enough, their defect, which is a dyke against progressive ideas, is a wellspring of national art. I quote one of their own, who, speaking of the few lesser works of Roelofs, Israëls, Mesdag, Bosboom, Tom, and others, which hang on the walls of the small gallery connected with the museum, says: "It is *our* sea, *our* land, *our* cattle, *our* thatch, *our* town, *our* winter, *our* water, and *our* light which is represented here."

The italics are the Dutchman's, not mine, and give better than an exegetical volume on the subject an insight into the national weakness which is the strength of Dutch art and Dutch life.

One realizes something of the departed glory of this ancient land when one sees the jetsam gathered in so unique a place as the Frisian Museum. We realize, too, what close affiliations, historically, the English race has with the ancient Frisian. The Anglo-Saxon dialect is its next of kin. There is a little couplet that runs:

Good butter and good cheese
Is good English and good Fries.

This is perfect English and perfect Frisian.

I made two delightful "finds" of my own: a delightful word, *gissing*, with a verb *gissen*, to guess, to conjecture! A fine patent of ancient nobility for our Yankee "I guess"; never again should it be tabooed in polite con-

versation. My other "find" took me into the region of American slang, and showed me the phrase as legitimate heir of good old Dutch, or Frisian! There was a curious word, *bons*, used in connection with a Guild Penny. Tracing it, I found that *de bons krijgen* was to be discharged, in other words — *to get the bounce!!*

James says if only it had been "grand bounce," the "find" would be perfect. He is too critical!

The famous Chancellerie, just around the corner from the Museum, seems to emphasize the royalty of this ancient capital of Friesland. Its façade carries all the emblems of majesty — stone lions, stone escutcheons, the shafts, that one may see duplicated on the tomb of William of Orange in the New Church at Delft, and — the hated name of Philip II., King of Spain!

But apart from that, and a glimpse of the interior of the Catholic Church at Sunday morning service, where we saw, shining between the pillars, the silver-gilt casques of the women and girls, Leeuwarden seemed to us a child of the New Time, rather than of the Old; and all its grand boulevards in miniature, its large Cattle Market — the centre of the agricultural interests in Friesland — its promenades and broad water ways bear the stamp of the "capital," where one looks in vain for the Ancient Frisia that is found within the walls of its Museum.

The ramparts of Leeuwarden are very beautiful; they have been converted into shady promenades and border

the ancient moat, the Noorder and Wester Singel. Here on the Noorder Singel you will find my Great Tower of Leeuwarden, and its double in the motionless waters. It leans a little away from them, as if fearing to see too much of its huge bulk in such an unstable firmament. It is the old belfry of the church of St. Vitus, long since destroyed; it is the *Hofsterkerk;* it is the *Oldhove;* it is one of the most ancient landmarks in all the land, and tradition has it that centuries ago the sea washed its base. The curator of the Museum told me that the authentic date of its erection is 1517 — the year of the Reformation. It is an unfinished brick tower of enormous bulk; the ornamentations in wrought iron are noticeably fine, and so delicate that one can but wonder who designed these artistic tendrils that creep up and about the giant mass of brick much as ivy finds its way, upreaching, on an old tower.

I saw it one Sunday morning "in the mists beyond the Zuider Zee," and wondered to find myself so close to a realized ideal! I shall always connect its ponderous mass and other-worldly surroundings with the Pied Piper of Hamelin, for I never saw so many children gather around me as flocked about me on my short tour of inspection around the *Oldhove.* I have no idea what attracted the first dozen or two, unless it was the fact of my being a foreigner, at once recognized as such, and immediately catalogued with the strange animals in the Zoo. But, at the first corner of the tower, I noticed there were be-

tween twenty and thirty. As I rounded the next corner, I stopped to count, laughing at them the while; they numbered fifty-five. As I doubled the third corner the noise of little feet behind me shuffling over the pavement was like the trailing of heavy brushwood over stones. I counted again; there were between seventy and eighty! I completed my circuit of the great tower with an ever-increasing following. When I stopped to look at some detail of the tower, they stopped. When I moved on, they, with one accord, moved on too. When I smiled, they smiled, and, gathering about me, looked up into my face as if wondering how I came there.

Indeed, I found myself wondering how I came there; for the ancient tower, the gathering mists, the misting waters in which the reflection of this *Oldhove* began to be dimmed, the green ramparts, and the children flocking so close about me and looking up into my eyes with all the curiosity of youth beneath the old, old tower of Leeuwarden, that had stood there, unheeding youth and age, for so many centuries, all served to dull reality and induce a conviction of unreality as to time, place, and personality.

James, appearing round the corner whither he had gone to get a cab in case of rain, brought me into the Actual again. His amazement at my following was unbounded; but he did the only thing proper in the circumstances: put his hand in his pocket, and, ignoring the hundreds of hands upreached to catch the expected rain

of pennies, gave a bystander some money to buy cakes for the "crowd," as he called it. It began to rain most opportunely, and from the cab window I took my last look of the *Oldhove* and of the children who, gathering close about the man, James' almoner of prospective cakes, never once looked at the departing foreigner — and that was so like children!

"Well, Persis, you've had your cake, too; are you satisfied with your Great Tower of Leeuwarden?"

"Oh, yes, James," I said, but sighed as I answered.

"What's that for?" he said, leaning to look into my face.

"I don't exactly know; but I think I've had enough of the Great Tower for ever and ever — those children —"

James patted the back of my hand. "Yes, I know, Persis. It's time for us to be leaving Leeuwarden. I should get the blues here just as quick as I get them in Paris. I don't feel at home in this semi-capital, and with all its fine streets and grand houses, it's the only place in the Netherlands I've been near getting home-sick; — I want to get back across the Zuider Zee."

"So do I, James; let's go on the next train."

He took out his watch. "It starts in half an hour; can you be ready?"

"Try me and see," I replied joyfully, and bade the driver hurry back to the hotel.

It is, perhaps, unnecessary to add that we caught the train.

CHAPTER XXIV

BY STILL WATERS

Gouda, Utrecht, Amersfoort

We wanted to see the other Lake Country of the Netherlands that lies southwest of Leeuwarden; we wanted to see Kampen and its gate, one of the oldest in the country, but we knew that in six weeks, at most, midsummer would be upon us and the time to enjoy the Netherlands is in the spring and June. Then if one travel by canal, *vaart*, or river, he may avoid fetid waters made tepid by the August sun, as well as all the sights and sounds incident to water travel along the highways on which a whole population lives and moves and has its being in a very literal sense. The canals are the dumping grounds for the inhabitants of *kof* and *tjalk*, who keep house on them, and use the canal, or river, for both front and back dooryard. Everything of waste goes "overboard." Add to this condition of things the fact that the dwellers on land utilize the waters, that wash their very thresholds, for all domestic purposes, and one can readily understand that a great portion of the Netherlands should be seen, as we saw it, in order to hold the land as a charming permanence of recollection and remembrance.

We found we must give up some plans that were dear to us if we were to spend much of the glorious prime of the warm season in Zeeland, and to see what was of particular interest to James: the great Rhine country of the Low Lands in its entire length and breadth. To accomplish this in the time at our disposal, we found, much against our inclination, that we must make use of travel by land as well as by water.

Oom Kees, or Uncle Corney, our first mate, an out and out old sea-dog and a genuine Zeelander, kept telling us we were missing so much in spending our time in the "country," as he called with some contempt every acre of solid ground out of Zeeland, and the Captain kept writing us such cordial notes of encouragement to leave Kampen and Drenthe for "another time" and be off to the sea islands and their June glory, that we finally yielded to the pressure brought to bear on us and directed Oom Kees and his nephew-captain to leave us at Enkhuizen, and take *The Broomstick* by the shortest cut to Nÿmegen in Gelderland. We purposed to meet them at that place. Moreover there were Ben Hardon and the girls to be considered. Five minds can never be as two, and James and I knew that we could no longer follow our way in everything, if the comfort and satisfaction of our guests were to be considered.

We had planned another trip which we had to give up — for that time: to sail from Leyden again by the way of the Old Rhine to its junction with the Gouw, and follow

that along its length to Gouda. Our Dutch friends told us it was one of the most beautiful water ways in Holland. But we had to compromise and take Gouda in the usual way: that is, as other people have taken it, by rail. The country all about it is uninteresting, and an anti-climax after the beautiful meadows and farms of North Friesland.

The waters of the Yssel at Gouda are bright and clear-flowing. In this queer land where a river may run both ways, bifurcating without a watershed and apparently without complicating nature, the Yssel is a good servant to both the Old Rhine and the Maas. There is one portion of the town that these waters brighten which is like a scene depicted in some stained glass window within a mediæval church. It is this special locality that one makes the journey by rail to see: the Market-Place, the group of houses near by and the Groote Kerk which they surround.

Of all the innumerable *groote kerks* in the Netherlands the Groote Kerk of Gouda seems to be the *grootest*. It is so great that you cannot find it for a while. This is literally true. To be sure, one can see the tower if one can stand off at the distance of a mile; a portion of it may be seen at certain angles of vantage from different and distant parts of the town; but the church cannot be seen.

There are two or three approaches all of which lead round and about and anywhere except to a point from which one can see this Groote Kerk. One wonders at last if some necromancer architect built it only that some

small portion might be seen in an eluding perspective: a window, a chapel, an entrance beneath the belfry tower.

"As a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings;" that was my thought as I stood in the curiously irregular passage which is called *Achter de Kerk*, Behind the Church. The Groote Kerk of Gouda seems to brood the little houses that have settled so thick and close about it. Their tiny ancient gables, not one of which is more than twelve feet wide, lean to one another and are hung with heavy ivy. All about the church there are tiny squares and passages and courts and curving lanes, a willow green canal, a bridge, a small terrace set round with these mediæval dwellings, all of which are overshadowed by the ponderous mass of the Groote Kerk. One realizes, as one walks around it, what a sense of protection it must have given throughout the centuries to the dwellers in the shadow of its walls.

But it is when one steps within, that one pauses in amazement. The great round arches, the circular pillars, the barrelled vaulting, the magnificent stained glass windows stamp this interior as a national monument. One finds, not the house of worship, but the Pantheon of the Netherlands. One must go to Milan, to Antwerp, to see the equal of the forty windows. All this land is in them: its armorial bearings, its municipal arms, ancient Gouda with her device, *per aspera ad astra*, the siege of Leyden and of Haarlem. We may reconstruct from the former the city and its ramparts, its gates and walls, the

gathering of its citizens and troops for defense. Haarlem, also, is here, its towers, its portcullises, its ships and shallow surrounding water — a window all smoked topaz, burnt amber, and chalcedony. It is a rare example of the tints used before the general introduction of stained glass colored like an artist's palette. These two score windows show forth sacred history, as well as profane, and afford examples of the most curious pantheistic tendencies. We find in them dogs, swans, birds, fruits, flowers, Jerusalem, the clear blue of foreign skies, Catholic rites, St. Peter's keys, the keys of Leyden, and Christ driving the money-changers out of the Temple. This last is a gift of William the Silent. As I looked at it, it seemed as if he had spoken from out the centuries: "I, being dead, salute thee."

This church, like many others in the Netherlands, is undergoing a partial restoration; stones, brick, mortar, scaffolding, pulleys obstruct the views. But, mutilated as the interior is, there is enough of perfection left to prove to us how great was the power of art in the middle of the sixteenth century, how fine the work in glass, not duplicated in the Low Countries, of the two artist brothers, Wouter and Dirck Crabeth, and to show us, also, something of the departed glory of the Netherlands.

The market-place is far from being a commonplace square for traffic; it is delightfully uncommon. Where else would you look for a perky little Stadhuis as Dutch

as it can well be, yet flourishing all over with a Renaissance that brings a smile to your face? Where else can you find a meat-market beneath just such a little Town Hall? Where else can you see a flock of Dutch school children ornamenting a Renaissance outside staircase, and playing tag all over the steps? Where else can you see a Weigh House with such a beautiful piece of sculpture on its façade that it could be mistaken for a Town Hall?

Gouda is nothing if not compact, and the life and interest of the town centre in its market-place. The waters of the Gouw and the Yssel touch its streets into a kind of placid brightness, and in the midst its Groote Kerk broods throughout the centuries over the ancient gabled houses above which it looms.

James and I came to the conclusion that those who attempt to see every market-place, every town hall, every museum, every church, "old" and "great," in the Netherlands, must in the end find themselves subject to a martyrdom fully as tedious, if not quite as exacting, as that to which those who suffered through the Inquisition were subjected. We did not attempt this, nor did we wish to, and, as a result, we saw certain things in towns and cities which characterized the places so perfectly, that they remain with us in memory as individual: Leyden and its Rhine and Zÿl Gate, for instance, or Alkmaar and the approach to its Weigh House. So with Utrecht. We went to see the curves and sharp-angled bends and reaches of two great

BY STILL WATERS

GOUDA

UNIV. OF MICH.

canals the Oude and Nieuwe Gracht. James calls them "double-deckers."

Just here I may be permitted a word or two about the general plan of Dutch cities and towns. M. Havard has set it forth in his chapter on Amsterdam; but as I have seen for myself, and been able to compare one city and town with another, I may, perhaps, be allowed to express what I found in my own way, and without reference to him. They have a general plan owing to their middle-aged heredity. The Groote Kerk or Oude Kerk, the Market-Place, the Town Hall, the Weigh House and a big canal form the nucleus. If the town hall is not on the market-place it is generally within a stone's throw. Religion, Justice and, I will use James' word just here, "Grub" are the factors of the Dutch civic trinity that extend the hand to one another.

This nucleus was in olden times walled for defense; a moat surrounded the walls. A water-gate gave entrance into the town, and the canal that led to the market-place. A drawbridge — and by "drawbridge" the Dutch understand the bridges that are hoisted, the others are the "swingbridges" — connected the town with the countryside. As the city or town increased in area and population, the moats, canals, and ramparts became streets. The changes that the centuries wrought in the development of a city came to be almost literally reflected in its inland waters. A *voorburg*, or fortification before the town walls, was added; that, too, must have a wall. After two

or three generations, the city, having outgrown its limits, took in the *voorburg*, wall and all. At last we find in the heart of the present Amsterdam the *voorburgwals!* Now and then a canal, or a moat, was filled in, and the trace lost save for the name which endures.

As a result of this necessary and systematic evolution, we get a Dutch fortification nomenclature, technical in its way, to serve for the identification of streets at the present time. Take for a most perfect example, old Amsterdam. Its heart was the Damrak — a commercial water way — that, with the Oude Kerk, Stadhuis, Markt, and City Scales (perhaps the very ones from which Rembrandt van Rÿn saw and sketched the ruined tower of the Stadhuis), formed the nucleus of the city. This may serve for prototype of all the others. About this centre we find to-day the great water thoroughfare of the *Oude Zÿds Voorburgwal*, the ancient barbacan-wall; the filled-in *Nieuwe Zÿds Voorburgwal*, the modern barbacan-wall — one sees this, as it was, in the illustration facing page 169; the *Oude Schans*, or old entrenchment; the *grachts*, or moats; the *singels*, or outer walls; the *vest*, or surrounding wall. In these words you find the epitome of a Dutch city, or large town. Add to this civic glossary *kade*, quay, *vaart*, passage (water), *veer*, a ferry, *haven*, and *poort*, a gate — whether water, cow, abbey, or prison; throw in a fish-bridge, a butter-ditto, and a *koren-beurs*, or corn-exchange, and with this vocabulary you can find your way about any city and town in the Netherlands. I forget — the

word picture is not complete without a *molen-slop*, or mill-lane.

The characteristic of one city may be its market-place, of another its stadhuis, of a third its canals, of still another its singels, of a fifth its poort, but with every year and the work of the Iconoclast Time, the gates are becoming hard to find. We went to Utrecht to see its great *Grachts*, old and new, and for what remains of its ancient Dom, or cathedral.

The country about Utrecht was uninteresting compared with what we had seen in the north. It is a great fruit and poultry producing province. No wonder that Melchior d' Hondecoeter and his uncle, Weenix, one born in Utrecht and one making his home there for a while, felt the influence of the environment and painted incomparable poultry, fruits, and game! But James and I cared little just at that time for these two masters, or even for Jan van Scorel, whose *Pilgrims to Jerusalem* are all to be seen here. We preferred to linger on Utrecht's famous bridges from which, owing to the sharp-angled bends of the Oude Gracht and Nieuwe Gracht, one obtains the finest views of the imposing cathedral tower.

We wandered the length of the two Grachts, two principal canals that wind through the city far below the level of the streets; so far, indeed, that there is a subterranean city of shops and warehouses beneath the pavements, the doorways of which open on a level with the canal. Here and there a tree is seen springing in all its

fresh green from the city's basement! A curious effect, a "double-decked" arrangement as James said, and one not to be duplicated, of a city above ground, a city below ground, a canal at the bottom of everything serving as water way for both, and upper and lower town connected by flights of shaky wooden steps!

I know of no more imposing and effective grouping than is afforded by these bridges, canals, fish-market and old cathedral tower as seen from the Stadhuis-Bridge. If one looks below, one may see beneath the black arch the swans floating on the shadowed water. But in this city of a hundred thousand inhabitants, one has to seek far if he would find anything ancient beyond the Grachts, the Dom, and the aged-looking Buurkerk.

This patriarchal bishopric of Utrecht clasps hands with the German Hildesheim, far away across the heaths, on a spur of the Harz Mountains. The same emperors ruled them, the same faith animated their artists in wood and stone. Hildesheim, after a thousand years, still had its famous rosebush and its antique bronzes that Bishop Bernward, the artist-souled shepherd, left as a beautiful legacy of Christian faith in works. Utrecht, after thirteen hundred years, has a cathedral tower several hundred years old to mark the spot where stood the first church of which Willibrodus was made bishop. In the worn pavement of the choir we find the two small stones, under which lie the hearts of two German Emperors. You may find the spot by the double-headed eagles cut in those stones. One thinks a thought or two,

in such surroundings, of past and fallen glory. A walk in the cloisters showed us some very beautiful detail of sculpture, and gave us a glimpse of what is rarely seen in the architecture of the Netherlands: the flying buttresses, in the present case with a slight ornamentation, which enhances, without obscuring, the beauty of their curving grace.

The tower still stands, one of the few finished ones in the land, strong in its massive strength, and fine in its noble proportions. The nave is gone, destroyed by a great wind in the seventeenth century, but the apse remains, and there we saw in the enormous yet delicately fascicled pillars, crowned with varied and beautifully carved capitals, an intimation of the departed grandeur of the perfect whole.

"I don't understand the Dutch!" James exclaimed, as we sat in the one-horse car, and were trundled with a fierce clanging of bells under and through the fine arch upon which rests the noble tower. "With their love of country and their pride in its art, why don't they preserve the monuments that are left from desecration? The idea of running a horse-car under that pretty nearly sublime archway! It's on a par with the belittling of their *groote* and *oude kerks* by plastering their sides with a lot of miserable little tenements and shops, like mud-swallows' nests against a barn. You can't find the beauty of half the architectural lines because they are hidden by these pygmy monstrosities. Look how they permit desecration in other and unmentionable ways!

There should be a state law against it. It just goes to prove what I am constantly feeling, that the Dutch lack, as a nation, a certain delicacy of intuition that prevents among them a comprehension of the Ideal. When will they wake up to the fact that they are too self-sufficient?"

This was a long speech for James, and I knew, by that same token, that his very soul was tried within him. I agreed with all his sentiments to which he gave such emphatic expression.

"Talk about the Iconoclasts!" I responded, as the Dom Tower dodged from view behind some small houses; "there is just as much iconoclasm now in the way they neglect their works of art, or demean them by such parasitic nuisances. I'd like to have a general house-of-worship cleaning throughout the Netherlands. Perhaps then a lover of the beautiful might enjoy these noble monuments of a noble worship without a feeling of disgust at every turn of a wall or cloister."

Continuing this righteous and grumbling duet, we got out at the Cattle Bridge, and paid a visit — not an unusual occurrence — to the old men and women, the city's charges, who go to their long home from out the walls of a former dwelling for nobles! This old patrician building is now a Home for the Aged. It is a pleasure to see the care with which these old people are surrounded. They were having their four-o'clock coffee and bread when we were there. The whole place was immaculate; the kitchen a study in shining pewter.

Above, the comfortable beds were curtained in snowy white, thus insuring privacy to each occupant of the dormitory, that may once have been a nobleman's banqueting hall for the Spanish roisterers of the time of Charles the Fifth.

On our short trip from Utrecht to Amersfoort I found that James was impatient to be upon the water, and pace — if such a dignified word can be used in this connection — once more the unpretending deck of *The Broomstick*. He was actually homesick for that green boat and its crew! He had learned half his Dutch from Oom Kees as he smoked a sociable pipe with him at the tiller. I, too, had a longing to see the cozy cabin once more, although I had been absent from it but a few days, to give my frugal orders to Neeltje, and to make acquaintance with the adopted cur that James had christened *Lump*, which is good German for ragamuffin, scoundrel, or scamp, as one may select. James said he was all three, and deserved the name if ever a dog did.

But, despite our longings, we were bound to visit Amersfoort, if only for a day. We could hardly be said to have been through the Gates of the Netherlands, if we had omitted its *Koppelpoort*, or Water-Gate. Moreover, it has its tower, Tower of old St. Mary's, all that is left of a great church. It still stands beside the sluggish waters of the Langengracht that drags its lazy length from one end of the town to the other.

Amersfoort, taken as a whole, is not beautiful, not attractive; but there are three portions of it which, once seen, remain in the memory as indelible pictures of incomparable charm. Follow the Langengracht past the many private footbridges and their miniature portcullises, locked against strangers, until you are fortunate enough to find one unbarred. As quickly as possible, poach on that special preserve and enjoy one of the loveliest sights in the whole land — all the more enjoyable because it is a stolen glimpse of paradise. Before you winds the narrow canal, shaded by trees on both sides, hedged with bushes, walled with bright gardens; it is as green as beryl from the reflected foliage. On your right, and very near you, the most perfect example of Gothic architecture in the country, Our Dear Lady Tower, rises three hundred and twelve feet above the green waters. It seems to me that with these two statements enough is said. The detail of low, crowded gables beneath it, of the bloom of hawthorn in the gardens, of the green of lindens and of the flower-set cones of horse-chestnuts at its base, must be left to the imagination.

The illustration is a composite of two points of view: one glimpse caught from the footbridge over the canal, and one full view from the prosaic precincts of a stable-yard in the town. This composite has been chosen to show something of the canal side, and also the architectural beauty in detail which is seen from the stable-yard. To present this view, the idealizing artistic charm

OUR DEAR LADY TOWER

AMERSFOORT

has been sacrificed, as well as absolute accuracy of setting.

We left the tiny bridge to wander farther to the Binnen Gracht and the West Singel; and afterwards when we returned to it, hoping to have one more look at that perfect tower, the small gate was locked! If it had been possible, I am quite sure the bridge would have been drawn up and the portcullis lowered. "Each man in his castle" is the Dutchman's motto, even if the castle be but a tiny gabled house on the Langengracht of Amersfoort. We turned back to the Binnen Gracht and the West Singel; to The Beck and Monnikkendam — Dam of the Monks. I fancy that was a part of their regular work in the old time, the building of dams to save their lives from a watery grave.

These four small, but surpassingly beautiful water ways within the town form the arms of a Greek cross. The centre is composed of a bridge and a triangular water-space in lieu of a square. To the left — the left arm of the cross — is the green-arched, narrow canal, The Beck. Spanning it in the near perspective is the Monnikkendam, a lovely gateway with two towers capped with extinguishers like the East Gate of Delft. They are half hidden by the foliage, and suggest their beauty rather than outline it. On the right stretches the Binnen Gracht, and crossing these two at right angles is the West Singel — all of them watery bowers of spring beauty.

In the truncated angle made by the West Singel and the Binnen Gracht stands a stately house, set in a lawn

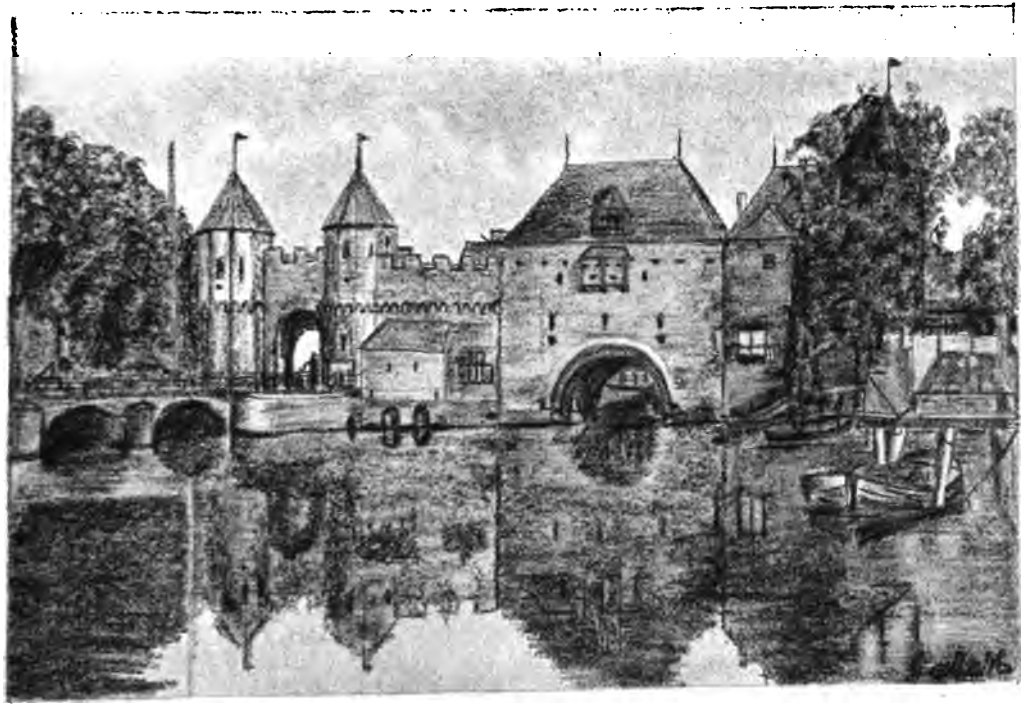
that slopes to the water's edge; on it a magnificent copper beech spread its bronze shadows. In the foreground white hawthorn stood in full bloom, and flushing the lawn here and there were great masses of full-blossomed damask-rose rhododendrons. Across the canal, above the dense rounded cones of some pink horse-chestnuts, the huddled roofs of Amersfoort showed their confusion of gables, and, beyond them, rose over all the Gothic reaching grace of Our Dear Lady Tower.

"You may search the world over for the equal of that 'much in little'!" said James.

When we could leave this spot, we walked on to the *Koppelpoort*. This gate is shown in the illustration as it stands to-day, and a word of description would detract from the truth of the actual. Of the double-walled and many-gated Amersfoort of the Middle Ages, there is but this one relic — this and the *Kamperbinnenpoort*, which is wedged into the buildings of the town in a manner impossible to get at satisfactorily.

Long may the *Koppelpoort* stand to rejoice others from a foreign shore as it rejoiced us! This ancient Water-Gate of Amersfoort saw the birth of the land's greatest patriot, after William of Orange: Van Olden Barneveld. It is not a far cry to that other mediæval portal, the *Gevangenpoort*, or Prison Gate, of The Hague, near which he suffered death. Thus, upon the Alpha and Omega of a noble patriot life, these two famous Gates of the Netherlands clasp hands.

WATER GATE AT AMERSFOORT



CHAPTER XXV

THE RHINE DAUGHTERS

It seemed as if we were making acquaintance with a new land on our journey from Amersfoort through eastern Utrecht and Gelderland to Nÿmegen. We were actually at times upon what might be termed a "height of land" in these Low Lands, where, save for the dunes, an ant-hill is welcomed as a break in the monotony of the surface. In point of fact, the triangle of country lying between Amersfoort, Arnhem, and Apeldoorn is the Little Switzerland of the Dutch. Some of the hills are fully three hundred feet high! In this land they are as satisfying to eyes accustomed to the level lowlands as are the Alps to a native of Cumberland who knows his Skiddaw.

In the summer there is an exodus of the coast dwellers to this part of the country. The queen at Het Loo in eastern Gelderland (*Loo* signifies eminence, generally wooded) finds here her happiest days. The broom was in blossom and the slopes of the sand hills bright with its sunshine when we made our journey thither. Sometimes when the train ran upon high land, we could see far away to the east the heaths dark with unblossomed heather. The whole of eastern Drenthe and Overÿssel,

in respect to the character of its soil and land surface, is of kin to the great heaths of Germany; they are like the Lüneburg moors of which they are a far continuation. Those who have seen something of the country south of Hamburg will find little of the scenic new in these portions of the Netherlands which I have mentioned.

Nÿmegen, pronounced *Nimvāgah*, was a surprise to us in more ways than one. The large new district that forms the approach to the station impresses one as a part of modern Rome, or a miniature Washington. It is beautiful. The avenues are broad and shaded. A large circle, Keizer Karels Place, like those of Edinburgh or Washington, only finer and larger, was filled with flowers and shrubbery. It is the meeting point of two curving boulevards, one of which leads to the Kronenburg Park, the other to the terrace of the Belvedere, whence one sees the river and the surrounding country for miles. Within these two embracing curves ancient Nÿmegen sits on her seven hills, a veritable Little Rome, an imperial city that wears its insignia to this day. This hilly amphitheatre slopes to the Waal, the largest and evidently the eldest of the Rhine Daughters. The setting of this city in the extreme east of the Netherlands is unequalled for beauty. Rome has her Tiber, Washington her Potomac, but the imperial seat of Charlemagne has its Waal, more beautiful than either!

At the extreme right of that embracing curve of boulevard lies, as I said, the castled Belvedere. Above

it, in a grove so dense that the sunshine scarcely penetrates to it, is a place which seems made for those Druid rites that obtained in the land till Charlemagne rooted them out by conversion, or decapitation of the participants. There we found the Valkhof: a small ruin more heathen than Christian in architecture, with one round blind-arched niche, and all sorts of greenery gracing its fallen stones. It is, however, a most effective small ruin, seen beneath the deep shade and against a dense background of foliage. It is just a touch, here in the Present, of an imperial Past when a Roman Emperor with Teutonic blood in his veins ruled the entire civilized world with an iron hand gloved in velvet.

To find such a city so far removed from the great commercial ports of South and North Holland was our first surprise. After we had visited the Waalkade, we had our second: *The Broomstick* was not there; but we found a note at the shipping office informing us that the worthy craft had been delayed by fog and would appear within two days. She was at Vianen on the Lek — another Rhine Daughter.

We took the steam train out to Berg en Dal, a hostelry for summer guests, noted throughout the land for its beauty of site. As we stepped onto the porch vestibule of the hotel, who should take my handbag but Ben Hardon! This was surprise number three.

Oh, but it was good to see a home face away off there in Gelderland! We forgot at the sight Berg en

Dal, we forgot Nymegen and its seven hills; Charlemagne and the whole Carlovingian dynasty might have been occupying the best suites in the hotel, for all we cared at that moment and for two hours afterwards. It was something of home that had come over to us — a real live bit of that dear America. (I say "bit" but Ben weighs fully one hundred and seventy.)

"Oh, Ben!" were my first articulate words, "have you had your boots blacked since you left America?"

I think he thought I had been long enough in the land to have water on the brain, for he looked at me a little wildly. I had to explain. "Because if you haven't, perhaps there is a particle of dust from that blessed land left on them; and if there is, I want to see it."

"Whew!" It was a long whistle. Then he smiled and said to tease: "Perhaps a little from the Hoboken docks — would that do?" I nodded.

"You don't mean to tell me that you've been a little homesick, Persis?"

"Oh, no, not a bit; but it's so good to see you. I can't wait now to see —" James coughed significantly, and I caught myself up in time to remember that I had promised not to say a word about the girls' coming until we should have reached Dordrecht.

"You found my letter at the banker's in Rotterdam?" James asked, when we had come to ourselves again, and were able to answer the host coherently.

"Yes, but the steamer came in eight hours ahead of time, so, instead of telegraphing you, I came on myself."

James wrung his hand again, and after we had had a home evening of chat and earnest talk, we settled down to enjoy Berg en Dal. Ben declared he would not leave it, not even to see Nÿmegen. He announced that Charlemagne was a back number, and didn't know what he had missed in not opening a hotel at Berg en Dal instead of building Roman palaces in the city. And what could we do but indulge him — especially in his condition of unrequited affection? Privately, I told James I could see few traces of the ordeal through which he had been made to pass so recently. All I received for an answer was: "Umph! You don't know Ben."

Berg en Dal, Hill and Vale, is situated on high ground nearly four miles east of Nÿmegen. All the little hills about are wooded with pine and other growths, and every sandy patch is bright with broom. From it may be seen a magnificent expanse of country and the rivers that water it. All of us knew the Rhine from Schaffhausen to Düsseldorf, and we all agreed that Germany had nothing to show comparable with the grandeur of this Lower Rhine as seen from Berg en Dal.

A few miles to the east above Nÿmegen, the German Rhine sends a great arm outreaching across the entire breadth of the Netherlands as far as the Maas below Dordrecht. It is called the Waal. A few miles to the north of Nÿmegen, among the wooded heights of Arnhem, the river bifurcates and sends another large arm straight north, as the Yssel, to Kampen and the Zuider Zee. Continuing on its western passage, the Rhine bifurcates

again midway on the boundary line of the province of Utrecht, and sends another powerful arm, the Lek, straight across country again to the Maas below Dordrecht, and afterwards runs for a while enfeebled, as the Crooked Rhine, to Utrecht. Here again it loses a member in the Vecht, and then crawls slowly, as the Old Rhine, on to Leyden where it enters the Rhine Haven hard by the Zÿl Gate, and renews its youth within the confines of that charming city.

This curiously interesting forking process, repeated again and again by this wonderful Rhine, makes of a large portion of Western Gelderland and South Holland an island oblong in shape and embraced by the arms of the Waal and the Lek, the old Batavian stronghold. This own country of the Rhine's Daughters — the "good meadow," of those old Batavians — whom he has left to enrich it while he goes the way of age to lesser tasks in the north, is crossed and recrossed by waterways, artificial and natural. South of this island runs the lawless Maas which forms the northern boundary of North Brabant. This explanation is necessary to understand why this Rhine Country, which may be seen in all its grandeur of expanse from Berg en Dal, is so peculiarly alluring to anyone interested in engineering, as well as to a simple soul like myself who rejoices in such natural beauty of a unique kind. A glance at a map of the Netherlands will serve, after this explanation, to fix clearly in one's mind this apparent confusion of many waters.

With Berg en Dal as our base, we crossed and recrossed this broad country, one part of which is called The Betuwe, and found all of it intensely interesting. We crossed the Maas, the Waal, the Lek — from 's Hertogenbosch, or Bois-le-Duc, in North Brabant, to Rhenen on the Lek. We discovered — or thought we did — the most beautiful tower on all the Rhine, upper or lower: St. Cunera at Rhenen. We made acquaintance with Geldermalsen and Zalt Bommel, with Hedel, a picture-village the like of which one may look far and near to find. The whole hamlet lies low among the green; the brown-thatched roofs — not a tiled one could we see — sloping so low to the ground and the meadows that the whole village looked like a colony of meadow-larks' nests hidden in the green, and no more like the dwellings of North Holland and Friesland, than a lark's nest is like a barn-swallow's.

The bridges that span these rivers are marvels of engineering. In crossing them, we could look up and down the great arteries of the Netherlands for miles and miles. Beneath, as far as the eye can see, are spread the lush meadows on which a thousand cattle graze. Sometimes a whole herd is seen standing knee-deep in the back waters of Waal, or Lek, that make clear pools as large as small lakes among the pastures. There is a fine feeling of expansive freedom, of physical and spiritual uplift in such an outlook and overlook in a wholly beautiful country. Here and there a village shows its thatched roofs, ponderous, uneven, hipped.

Here and there below us a steamer trails its smoke pennant, or a Rhine boat under full sail glides swiftly down the stream. It is this far-reaching, unbounded prospect—smiling in sunshine seems no metaphor in this instance—swept by great rain-curtains, mirroring, in its broad river-reaches, storm-cloud and sunshine as well as blue heavens and high white cloud, that makes the renown of Berg en Dal, and made us loath to leave it.

To carry with one an impression of Nÿmegen that cannot be effaced, one should cross the Waal on the *gierpont*, or ferry, to the village of Lent on the opposite bank. The pressure of the current works the ferry. After seeing this locomotive power at work one can readily understand the enormous difficulties Caesar overcame when he built that Rhine bridge over which every boy in the Latin School has puzzled.

From Lent you may see the red roofs of the city rising tier above tier from the water, and the towers of the Groote Kerk and Stadhuis dominating them. To the left is the castle on the Belvedere, to the right the remaining tower of the old fortifications, the foundations of both hidden by the foliage of the parks that surround them. It is a fitting frame for the legend of Lohengrin and the Swan, this ancient imperial city the feet of which are washed by the most beautiful of the Rhine Daughters.

CHAPTER XXVI

ST. JOHN'S OF BOIS-LE-DUC

JAMES had intended to withhold from Ben until the day came for us to embark, the pleasing fact that we had a Rhine yacht of our own for the river journey from Nÿmegen to Dordrecht. We had planned to break the long trip by a stop at Waarden in order to cross country once more to 's Hertogenbosch for Ascension Day, and to make a longer stay at Gorinchem. But we had to tell him a little in advance to induce him to leave Berg en Dal. His plea for lingering there was that "it was doing him no end of good."

I looked at James significantly when this remark was made, and inwardly had a qualm at the thought that all the "good" might be undone in less than a week's time when Lou and Lois were expected at Dordrecht. But James looked blank, and merely suggested that we go down to the Waalkade and look the boats over. There on the quay he told Ben, and we went on board our *Broomstick* which had weathered out the fog and made her appearance in due season. The mongrel cur, with forefeet stemmed on the stringer of the quay and his hind ones on the *Broomstick's* gunwale, met us with vociferous yelps. Whether "Lump" preëmpted Ben,

or Ben "Lump" I have never known; all I know is that from the moment of their introduction they were inseparable companions, until a week later in Dordrecht when both their noses were put out of joint, in an unexpected manner.

Neeltje made a little feast of a supper to celebrate our return, and gave us herring and potato salad, cold roast beef with mayonnaise sauce highly redolent of onion, good bread and tea, and, in addition, strawberries such as only the Netherlands can produce, with a plate of Nÿmegen *mappes* — I think I spell the name correctly. These are special cakes of the imperial city, and the recipe for them, for all I know, may have been handed down from Charlemagne's *chef*, who concocted dishes for the emperor in the Romanesque palace that once stood on the heights above our heads. It was a thoroughly Dutch supper, but a good one.

We spent that night at Berg en Dal, and sailed the next morning when the light mists had not risen from the Waal. A little later they dispersed, and we made the voyage beneath sunny skies.

This voyage from Nÿmegen to Dordrecht should be made by everyone who may have but little time — if only two weeks — to spare for the Netherlands. All the natural beauty that is seen afar from the wooded heights of Berg en Dal, or from the span of some mighty bridge, comes into intimate hand-to-hand relation with one at the level of the river. We came to have a speaking

acquaintance, as it were, with all the river craft that passed us, as well as with the hamlets and towns on the banks. The channel turns capriciously from side to side of the broad expanse. The rapid current carries the boat sometimes to the very edge of the lush meadows, and at others sweeps it out into mid-stream. The boats pulling up-stream literally work their passage, and are aided by an arrangement of windlass, ropes and make-fast irons by which they are worked laboriously against the current up the river. We stopped at Waarden, and went across by way of lovely Hedel to 's Hertogenbosch, or Bois-le-Duc, the Duke's Forest, as 's Gravenhage shows us the Preserves of the Counts.

North Brabant is a country by itself, and should be seen as such. We were obliged to save it for a *bonne bouche* of future travel. We saw only the northern part and a portion of the western. They may be as amphibious as the rest of the western lands, but they did not have that appearance in May. We saw hedges instead of canals, rich gardens, planted fields, thrifty orchards and thriving towns follow one another in quick succession. The sail among the meadows was rare and the windmill so seldom seen as to be a noticeable feature in the landscape. Flowers abound and the peasant life is gayer than in the provinces bordering the sea. One perceives it to be the next-door-neighbor country of David Teniers.

It was Ascension Day, and the peasants had come into

the city in full force to celebrate the feast in their beloved cathedral of St. John. One goes to Bois-le-Duc to see this cathedral, and little else. The iconoclasts of the Reformation and the greater iconoclast, Time, have, in a manner, spared this house of worship, and we of To-day may enjoy much of its ancient beauty. This and the Dom of Utrecht were the two great cathedrals in the Netherlands. It is a magnificent structure with all the suggestion of a profuse ornamentation that does not obscure the grace and strength of its beautiful lines. We realized as we entered it that we were within the sphere of influence in art that surrounds the Cathedral at Antwerp, the Hôtel de Ville at Brussels, the Stadhuis of Middelburg; these three with Bois-le-Duc's glorious "hymn of praise to God sung in unyielding stone" form an exquisite four-leaved clover of architecture, ecclesiastic and civic.

I wrote that first poetical flight with some satisfaction, for in this instance it did seem true; and just as I had finished, James chose to look over my shoulder, as he does frequently when I am at work — in order, I suppose, to assure himself that I am not getting "flowery" as he says — and took this, what seemed to me, inopportune moment to criticize my poetical statement.

"That's all right, Persis, as poetry, but the sentiment doesn't square with the facts."

"What do you mean?" I asked, with suspended pen.

"Why, the fact is that this particular cathedral was

built of a particularly friable stone, anything but 'unyielding,' and until the restorations were made it was in a dilapidated condition."

It is strange how a man of James' ideal tendencies can suddenly drop down to the bed-rock of fact, so soon as there is a statement made that isn't, so to speak, built on architectural lines, that is, with a base that is proportionate to the superstructure. I was moved to retort:

"Well, my dear, it may appear friable to you, but seeing it was built in fourteen hundred and something, and is still in a sufficiently robust state of preservation to last several centuries, I am going to keep my wings poised in poetical flight and stick to the 'unyielding'."

"Oh, well, it won't harm the book; you might state the fact, however, as a set-off to it."

"Hm-m." With this marital intermezzo, I felt at liberty to resume my work.

I shall always associate that Ascension Day — the Journey to Heaven Day, as the Dutch say so aptly — with the Easter in the Scheveningen fishermen's church. The same earnest, hearty spirit of worship pervaded both congregations, the one Protestant, the other Catholic. But in the cathedral there were gathered thousands, where in the other there were hundreds. In the Protestant church there were not wanting signs of indigence, and the wear and tear of poverty; in the cathedral there was everywhere in evidence the opulence of the one class

and the comfortable living of the other. In the Scheveningen church there were lacking all ornament and church paraphernalia, save the gold cap-pins of the women, the silver chalices of the communion, and the grotesque yet congruous backbone of the sea leviathian in the corner. In the church, as in cathedral, there was sung the praise of the Creator; but one was filled with the deep abiding sound of the fishermen's voices that called upon the Lord for faith and strength to endure — the cry of a toil-worn humanity. In the ancient St. John's, the *Gloria* pealed among the arches of the great nave that sent back the echo of the boys' voices, untried yet in the world's furnace of passion and toil — the antiphonal of the "choir invisible."

The peasants were in gala costume, and the nave was a sea of white caps and artificial flowers. The Brabantese wear a large lace cap, with full cape. A yard or two of broad white damask silk ribbon is banded over the top and fastened as far as the ears; the long ends are loose, and flutter and float about in the wind. Over the top of the cap, covering the ribbon band, is worn a large half-wreath of white artificial flowers. The effect is beautiful in the mass and charming in the individual. Even the aged women of eighty look as if they had renewed their youth, when one sees their wrinkled, but healthy, faces looking out cheerfully from the mass of lace, ribbons and flowers. The whole community, as seen that day at church and in the streets, gave one the im-

pression of well-to-do-ness, of physical *bien aise*, the result of comfortable living.

The Stadhuis, after the service, was filled with citizens of all classes. One of the ancient rooms above — it was worth climbing the stairs to feel the support of a massive and ancient balustrade in carved wood — had been set apart for the distribution of prizes for the drawings of the pupils from the schools. They were remarkable, many of these drawings — all copies of prescribed works which were by masters old and new, and to judge from the exhibition, the future of the art of delineation would seem secure. I could but feel that among those pupils there must be another Israëls, another Maris, or Mauve, perhaps a Bosboom to paint for us the interior of Bois-le-Duc's noble Cathedral of St. John as it may be seen on a bright Ascension Day.

CHAPTER XXVII

GREAT HEAD GATE

THE best port of entry for all the delights of Dordrecht is Gorinchem. It is situated, as James suggests, on one of the Rhine's granddaughters, the Merwede. The Waal at Gorinchem, a few hours above Dordrecht, takes this name — pronounced *Mare-vā-dah* — and keeps on to Dordrecht where it masquerades again as De Noord and mingles with the Maas.

The approach to Gorinchem, — pronounced Horkum, as Gouda is spoken Howda — the approach to Alkmaar, and to Veere in Zeeland are, perhaps, the most strikingly effective among the many water-approaches in the Netherlands. The Waal just here is lake-like and broken into broad irregular reaches by points, a few of them wooded. We were on the lookout for ancient Woudrichem, pronounced Workum, as we rounded one of them on which stands the Castle of Loevenstein, intimately connected with the Netherlands' seventeenth century history. After rounding this, we came upon the old church tower of Woudrichem, a ponderous, unfinished mass of great architectural beauty, and first cousin to the neighboring one of Dordrecht. It is a landmark

for the country, as is Dort's, and can be seen for miles in three directions.

Our Uncle Corney, or Oom Kees, as we preferred to call him, had been growing more and more loquacious as we neared his native Zeeland. He was a wonderful old fellow, only sixty-one, but looking seventy-five so seasoned was he with salt water and bent with toil. He had been in England, Singapore, Japan, and South America, and both spoke and understood English passably well. But in his pride and excitement of showing us some new beauty of his watery land, he would lapse into Dutch, and describe it with a whole-hearted enjoyment that was always a source of amusement for James and for me. Sometimes he would tell yarns that flavored of fish; but if I doubted, he would look at me reprovingly out of his weather eye, which was always as wide open as the other was close shut — apparently! — and with a significant gesture, raise his salt-water-cracked and tiller-calloused right hand, the two first fingers uplifted and the rest folded into the palm, with such an honestly injured expression that I was forced to believe him. Ben and he were friends from the first. He heard us exclaim at the age and mass of the ancient tower of Woudrichem, as it came into view, and favored us with a word or two of explanation in Dutch.

"Ja, it's so old that the grass got to growing heavy on top of it — you can see from here what a sight there must have been — and nobody dared to go up there and

mow it, it was so high; so they rigged up a derrick and a tackle, and hoisted a cow up there to graze it off."

"Oh, Oom Kees! Not up there!" I had to protest.

"Ja, up there; and when they finally got the cow up she was — *caput.*"

"Not dead?"

"Ja, *caput* for good and all."

"When did this happen?" James asked skeptically, thinking to phase him a little. The answer came promptly:

"Seventeen hundred and thirty-three." We translated for Ben.

"And grass grows there now?" Ben inquired, pursing his lips.

"Ja; take the glass and you'll see for yourself." He handed him the glass. Sure enough grass was growing in the crannies and on the top of the walls. Still I doubted; I turned to him.

"Now, Oom Kees, is this *true?*"

He looked me straight in the eyes with his one honest, open, weather one, and, raising the two fingers of his right hand, repeated without the twitch of a facial muscle: "Seventeen hundred and thirty-three."

What could we do but accept so solemn an affirmation?

Gorinchem, like human things, must be known to be loved. When once known and loved, one returns to it in spirit again and again, and always with the hope of

APPROACH TO GORINCHEM

returning to it in the flesh. The approach just outside the water-gate is seen in the illustration; but what is not seen is the wonderful approach on the Merwede. The town is ramparted with dykes that have salients like real fortifications, and bastioned by two great windmills, one at each end of the town. *De Eendracht*, a behemoth of a mill, the name of which signifies *Union*, towers above the shelving dyke-walls. Its great moving arms throw their shadows on the river waters. Within the flood-gates are the iron lock and sluice-gates that protect the inner haven. This is a large rectangular basin, bordered and shaded by elms and lindens, in which the bright-sailed craft are moored, and into which our worthy *Broomstick*, after nosing, literally, the iron sluice-gates, entered with colors flying, both of the Netherlands and the United States.

We moored by the broad, terraced, stone steps that extend two hundred feet or more along the "Eind" which forms within this dyke-ramparted town a kind of Venetian *piazzetta*. And James and I never enjoyed Venice, its canals, and piazzetta, more than we did the "Eind" and its clear green waters, shut safe and sound behind the double flood-gates. The vista of the long Linge Haven, that extends the length of the town and connects with the Linge, an affluent of the Merwede, is as fascinating in its way as the Grand Canal. Its back balconies and bow windows, projecting far over the water and filled with ivy and flowering plants, let one

into the intimate life of the people as no Venetian palace façade can ever do. The town has its great campanile, also, St. Jan's Tower that leans at a dangerous angle above the roofs of Gorinchem. It has what Venice has not, its Dalem Gate, over by the fishers' quarters.

We took a walk that evening of our arrival out through this old gate to the adjoining fishers' ward and the dykes beyond. We came upon a group of fishermen just outside the shadow of the arch. There were, perhaps, sixteen of them, and one and all removed their caps and gave us the usual evening salutation. It is charming to receive these greetings in a foreign land, for they are an index, not of dependent servility, but of brotherly good will and independent manhood.

There is always a foot-path along the dykes, and we followed it. In the soft rich evening light, that holds, as it were, the orange-red mists of sunset in suspension long after the sun is beneath the horizon, the wide waters of the Merwede gleamed like a mother-of-pearl shield embossed with emerald. The breeze blew fresh over the seemingly boundless meadows beyond the dykes. Some fishermen, sitting by their upturned boats, were mending their nets. The cries of children playing in the street beyond the Dalempoort came faintly to us. As the dyke zigzagged to the entrance of the haven just by the great windmill, we came upon some houses high on the dyke wall beside the water-gate. Just there a long balcony, the balustrade of which was covered with

trailing vines and bright with blossoms, overhangs the outer waters of the Merwede. We saw little tables set in it, and people moving to and fro behind the vines; we heard from within the house singing and laughter. It was a living picture after Van Ostade.

It seemed the continuation of a serial story to enter the narrow streets once more, and climb the steep stairs in our comfortable inn to the large, low-ceiled bedrooms; to fall asleep in the knowledge that on the morrow we might wake to all the enjoyment of "De Eendracht," the "Eind," the homelike clatter of wooden *klompjes* on the pavements, as well as all the sweet sounds of an unspoiled country life that was everywhere in evidence about us.

Such a town of "little gates" as it is! Flood-gates and sluice-gates and Dalem Gate, and one ancient, tiny "goose-gate," which gave me entrance into a close that was a left-over bit of the Middle Ages, and Hugo de Groot's *poortje*, another "little gate," and garden gates, and gates that open upon the green slopes of the far-stretching dykes!

A fine introduction, this little Gorinchem, for the greater Dordrecht on the lower Merwede! Let anyone from across the sea enter by its water-gate and sit for a summer's day in the shadow of De Eendracht, or on the terraced steps of the "Eind" and watch the life of the place all about him. That man will never count that day but as a gain.

We had hoped to sail from Gorinchem to Vianen and from there to Vreeland on the Vecht; but it would not bring us to Dordrecht in time for the girls. That is another bit of enjoyment we have saved for the future.

Dear old Dort! With its quays, and drawbridges, and vessels, and boats, masts, rigging, trees, houses, gates, and the Dean of Dutch towers, all higgledy-piggledy — tower, masts, and houses beginning no one knows where and ending no one knows how! One thing only is certain, as you approach it from the Merwede, that there never was just such an old town guarded by just such an old church, standing with both feet in lively, bright-blue, glinting waters, as this same Dort on the lower Merwede.

I have been so fortunate as to approach it by water — and unless one has made this approach he cannot be said to have seen Dort — six times, and every time its surpassing charm has grown the greater. To see far away in the distance, as we sail down the Merwede, the great tower loom faintly blue; to watch it draw nearer and nearer and define itself as the guardian of the town; to catch a first glimpse of Great Head Gate and see it detach itself from the surrounding jumble of houses and masts, and plant itself sturdily in open-arched welcome to the stranger; to disembark under the great trees on the Merwekade; to find one's way through that great gate, and around the corner to a particular inn and up winding stairs to a particular room, the side window of which opens on a small balcony that is flush with the

windows of that gate, is to feel "at home" in a strange land, and an "at-oneness" with the surroundings.

James had written for our rooms, and as I leaned on the taffrail watching our approach, about four in the afternoon, I pleased myself by thinking how soon I could preëmpt my room by the Great Head Gate and, placing my chair on the little balcony, watch, under the protection of the historical walls, the fascinating life of the great water way beneath me.

"The best laid plans," etc. As we drew to the quay at the foot of the gate, I was aware of a girl dressed in pink sitting in a straw chair on that same preëmpted Great Head balcony of mine! She was holding over her bare head a rose-pink parasol, frilled and flounced with white lace and chiffon. For a most effective background she had the façade of the splendid old domed *Groothoofdspoort*, all carved lions, and heads, and allegorical figures, and medallions. I confess it was a startling sight, and for a few minutes it dwarfed the great gate, its dome, its arch, and everything about it into insignificance — just a pretty American girl in a pink dress with a rose-pink sunshade over her head to dwarf the Great Head Gate of ancient Dordrecht!

But she did it! And so effectively that James exclaimed under his breath, before I could regain my mental equilibrium:

"By George! She's scored one on her side this time! What'll Ben say?"

This was my thought — a far from pleasing one, — and I gave the girl a mental shaking for springing such a surprise on us. Yet I might have expected something of the sort, knowing Lois as I do. I looked towards Ben. Apparently he was lost in admiration of the view afforded by our approach.

"Let things take their course," I whispered hurriedly to James — and they did!

Lump always accepted the dropping of the tow-fender by Oom Kees between *The Broomstick* and a quay as the signal for him to make known our arrival to all whom it might, or might not, concern. This he now proceeded to do with such vim and thoroughness that our otherwise unpretentious craft was forced upon the attention of every lounger on the quay, every occupant of the inn at the windows which looked to the Merwede, every man of every crew on the various river craft about us. It was a steady fortissimo "*jah, jah, jah,*" with not a breath between, wholly confusing as well as deafening.

Suddenly from the balcony came an answering yelp, then a chromatic scale of frantic squeals and choking barks. There was a flurry of the pink dress, a grab at the dog to keep him from throwing himself between the irons of the balustrade, a reaching into the window; then the two, girl and dog, stood there together. The thoroughbred Boston terrier, for such I perceived him to be — the one that Ben had given her the winter

before — was vainly attempting to dash himself over into the street. With one hand the girl was waving with might and main a small Stars and Stripes; with the other she was restraining the almost frantic dog in his efforts to reach Ben.

We perceived that this was intended for a salute to our flag. Oom Kees dipped the colors, and James and Ben bared their heads, like the two dear American men that they are; and, somehow, in the confusion of the canine duet, and amidst laughing, and pretty nearly weeping on my part, I got myself disembarked only to find Lou's and Lois' arms about me.

"And how do you do, Mr. Hardon?" Lois said, cordially, offering him her hand over the gunwale as she stood on the quay. "Well, if this isn't jolly! You don't mean to say, Cousin James, that this is our boat and we're to go in it! How perfectly lovely! I'm coming on board." And therewith she ran over the small gangplank, and within five minutes had pronounced "the whole thing perfect," had the promise from Neeltje of a herring-salad for a supper at some future time, had shaken hands with our grave nephew-captain and brought a smile to his face, and reduced Oom Kees to an abject state of slavish adoration; in fact, in ten minutes she owned *The Broomstick*. That is Lois.

"Oh, where's Bizzy?" she exclaimed, as a sudden cessation of the double yelps allowed our own voices to be heard. "That dog's been more trouble than he's

worth!" she exclaimed, half-pettishly. I perceived this remark to be made for the benefit of Ben.

"I'll gladly take him off your hands, Miss Moulton. The old fellow and I used to be such chums," said Ben, in such a hearty tone of assurance that it did my soul good to hear him; I knew he could stand his ground after I heard that.

Prince Bismarck, as the aristocratic thoroughbred was named, and called Bizzy for short, was at that moment low on his paunch engaged in licking Ben's boots with a desperation of loving frenzy. He, too, had entered into his own again, for he had been Ben's dog before he had been given to Lois. I saw at once that Bizzy's return to his early allegiance and its expression were not pleasing to our small cousin. But she smiled, and answered just as heartily:

"You're awfully kind to take him off my hands, for I shall really enjoy going about without him tagging at my heels and threatening to fight every foreign dog he meets; and, so far as I see, he meets with one about once a minute here in Holland."

"I'll see to it that he doesn't trouble you any more," said Ben, rather stiffly, and I perceived that the war was on again between the two, and groaned inwardly. "And by the way, how do you happen to come and surprise us here in this fashion?" he said, pleasantly; "it's time to give an account of yourselves," he added, turning to Lou.

I know I was mean; but I left James to explain the situation as best he could, and hurried Lou away with me through the archway to the hotel — and another room than the one I had preëmpted by the Great Head Gate!

CHAPTER XXVIII

DORT

For the next few days we lived on the Gate and under it and pretty nearly over it. It was such a satisfaction to James and me to live next to Middle-aged History, which period we are fast approaching, and be able at any time to run into it and lose ourselves in the Past of this remarkable land.

It is an interesting collection that is on exhibition in the two or three rooms of the Groothoofdspoort and its cupola. It is well worth the hours spent in it, if one would enter more fully into a conception of the paraphernalia of life, as it was lived in the seventeenth century when the great Dutch masters were so fond of painting it. There is a chimney-piece from the Kloveniers-Doelen, a wonderful piece of wood-carving in old oak, perhaps the finest of its kind in the Netherlands. It is surmised that the master wood-carver, Terwen, had a hand in this. Such a work of art gives one an adequate idea of the rich interiors of these old *doelen* that have figured so largely in the annals of art and civic defense. But what pleased us most is an old door from the homestead of a certain Joost Smits of Dubbeldam, on which is painted the life-size figure of a man by Dordrecht's own son, Albert

Cuyp. I have seen nothing of Cuyp's so human as this figure portrait of a well-to-do farmer — for such it appears to be — that looks out at you from the panels of the ancient door as if bidding you welcome to his home. I wondered if it might not be the ancestor of this same Joost Smits, at whose farmhouse Albert Cuyp had been a welcome guest, and one day in merry painting mood had left the portrait of his host as an autograph card on the hospitable door!

There is a fine collection of "penningen" and medals, memorializing pretty nearly everything connected with Dordrecht except its great artists. There is nothing for Nicholaes Maes, but plenty for the two great brothers, John and Cornelius de Witt. There is an Ary Scheffer Plein in the town, but no memorial to the town's greatest son — Nicholaes Maes. Time, I trust, and public sentiment will change this order of things.

Lou and Ben were generally with us on what we called our exploring parties, but none of us attempted to keep track of Lois. She declared she had fallen in love with Dordrecht and everything Dutch, and would like to spend a summer there. She spent part of her time trundling in the open one-horse car from the station to Great Head Gate, and loved to jingle through its arched way out upon the quay, where nothing prevents the horse from trotting into the Merwede but an instinct that directs him to remain on terra firma for his own good. She was to be found of a morning when the

lights were cool on the water, in some one of the *steigers*, the short, narrow, sloping, paved, and stepped lanes between two houses. They serve as landing places from the Voorstraatshaven. Generally she was sketching the ever-charming view, beloved by artists, that is seen in the illustration.

Once, having missed her for a couple of hours, we traced her to the market-place. It was market-day, and she said she could never have enough of that special market held in Dordrecht. The peasants land their wares, or rather pile them, on the pavement of the narrow streets, or lay them out attractively in small portable booths. It was a goodly sight: the flutter of the white caps over the eggs and butter, the earnest crowds about the vegetable display on the paving stones and about the booths that filled the Groenmarkt. These are crowded with cheap wares which vary from a pin and suspenders, to a looking-glass and wooden shoes. She learned to imitate a man who was a figure in this market; he was hawking his wares of blue earthen-ware by singing over and over some doggerel rhymed advertisement, the refrain of which ran "Blue, blue, blue." It was part recitative, part singing; and the man, his blue wares, and his song were a charming adjunct of the crowded market-place.

Ben did not seem to mind her presence, nor she his. They avoided being alone together, otherwise I should have judged both of them to be reconciled to the decree

A REMINISCENCE OF VENICE

DORDRECHT

of Fate. After the first skirmish about the dog, the strained relations between them had ceased to be noticeable; but they had extended to the two dogs, and the condition became chronic. Bizzy was obliged to be kept at one end of *The Broomstick*, with Oom Kees to spoil him, and Lump at the other in Neeltje's protecting care. Had it not been for these precautions, there would have been continuous scrappings. As it was, we used to hear wild scufflings and squeals and *gurr-gurrings* in the quiet evening hours when we went round to the Old Haven where *The Broomstick* was moored; and often in the daytime, when we paid a visit to the boat, we could see from afar Bizzy tied at the prow under the Stars and Stripes, and Lump chained aft under the Netherlands' colors. As we drew nearer we could see both dogs fairly quivering and twitching with suppressed enmity, and hear them *gurr-gurring* at each other with the length of the boat between them!

I saw Lois, once when Ben was not looking, try to coax Bizzy to come to her, but he would have none of her without his adored master. I fancied she looked a little crestfallen for a moment; then she caressed Lump, rather effusively. Lump, being a Dutch dog and not demonstrative in affection, was rather impressed by this show of kindness, and, feeling sore over Ben's apparent defection, he took the caress for genuine sentiment and attached himself to her thereafter.

It was Lois who found out, in hunting about for the

house of Cornelius de Witt, a home for "Christ's Folk" — orphan girls and boys, old men and women, dependent on the charity of others — and made friends with the good Sisters in charge. I know for a fact that she gave the old women afternoon coffee and cakes, and the girls ditto; that she counted among her acquaintances the Sister-cook, a grand-looking woman as large as a man. She was dressed wholly in white linen — I saw her afterwards — and her cap flaps were miniature jib-topsails. Her sixty loaves of bread, that she had put to rise when I visited her typical Dutch kitchen, were white and fine and light, for I lifted a loaf to test it. This woman was an artist in her way, as well as a devout follower of her Master. The Sister in charge took me into the chapel and the gardens surrounding it. In one green corner was a glistening shrine fully ten feet high and proportionately wide. It had been made by the artist-cook out of her cinders and coke refuse, out of the house breakage of plates, colored china bits, and glass! All the crannies and cracks were filled with growing trailing vines and delicate grasses.

Surely there are more ways than one of praising the Creator! But I shall never see a more unique, a more reverent, a more touching manifestation than this same cinder-shrine in the corner of the old garden near the Kerkbuurt in Dordrecht. It was only a Dutch cook's hymn of praise, sung this time not in "unyielding stone," but in the offscourings of the kitchen fires; yet

I place her work, for the spirit in which it was done, with Fra Angelico's *Virgin and Saints* that one used to see in St. Mark's in Florence, with Bishop Bernward's bronzes in the Cathedral of Hildesheim, and with Terwen's wood-carvings in the Groote Kerk of Dort.

These carvings of the choir-stalls in the Groote Kerk should be seen by every one interested in the developing Art of the Netherlands during the sixteenth century, —the precursor of Rembrandt's and the century of Dürer and Holbein, of Moreelse and Van Scorel. Here again we find, as in Gouda's windows, something of the departed glory of the Netherlands.

We gave a part of two forenoons to the study of this work, the finest of its kind in the country. What must these great churches have been in the full glory of their carvings in wood, their sculptures in stone, their mural paintings, their masterpieces at the altars, their beaten brass and gold and silver? Nowadays one has only an intimation here and there of what has been: a whitewashed pillar has been scraped and shows beneath the lime the original coloring; here and there in the museums one finds the bits of carving in wood and the broken sculpture in stone; that is all that remains.

In these carvings we find the expression of the two great governing forces of the civilized world about the middle of the sixteenth century. They body forth the spiritual and the temporal power: the power of Chris-

tianity through the medium of the Church, and the power of sovereignty in the triumph of Charles the Fifth.

When this great artist, Jan Terwen Aertsz, desired to rest both body and soul from his labors with the lords spiritual and temporal, he carved just an every-day peasant with his basket of eggs ready for the market in Dort — a woven willow basket, of the pattern of today, carved with all the loving care that he put into the rich trappings of the Emperor's following, or the folds of the Virgin's mantle. He gave his imagination free rein in depicting the lesser things of life; we find the lower animals, a bat, two dogs, a bird — the catalogue of them all would fill a quarto — enjoying jokes of their own, and playing pranks on their kind. But these works take a low place in the synagogue. They are carved low down on the seats, far removed from the grand friezes behind the rows of stalls, and their triumphant processions. There is caste even here in Art!

How the poor artists have struggled throughout the centuries to represent Jonah and the Whale, and how ill they have succeeded in their wood and stone interpretations of this episode! It was too much for Artist Terwen, and he solved his difficulties in his own way: he carved the finest kind of a man for Jonah, and then showed him dangling a neat little fish about the size, in miniature, of a rock-cod in his left hand! He is swinging along in the most nonchalant manner, and we perceive him to be not the Jonah of old,

but a sturdy Dort fisherman with a good-sized salmon in his hand! "Never mind!" I can hear Terwen say to himself, "I can't put a leviathan of the sea into a space of a few square inches, and a man inside the fish, yet Scripture must be upheld and endorsed in Art — so here goes for Jonah." It is a delightful bit of fun and carving combined.

There are two carvings here to which I should like to call the attention of anyone interested in this special work. One is on the end seat of the row of stalls towards the windows in the round of the apse, and the other on the end of the opposite row across the choir. Both face the eastern window of the apse; they are the last, or first, carvings of the hundreds and hundreds of figures presented in the whole great work. Both face the East, — that Jerusalem towards which the architects of old built the apse as towards the shrine of Christianity. One is a small Mater Dolorosa, mutilated and worn as are most of the other figures, but in pose so perfect that we can but wonder if Carlo Dolci took it for a model for his famous painting of the *Virgin of the Finger* in the Uffizi. The other, the "man of sorrows," an *Ecce Homo* that is own brother to that famous one by Rodin in the Royal Gallery at Brussels.

There is a depth of meaning in every one of these tiny carvings, for in this art, as in painting, the poet-soul in the artist interprets subjectively the common life of Humanity — a mother's pain, a son's bowed shoulders and sweat

of toiling agony. All this will endure so long as nature lasts, and man, the best of nature.

As we lingered in the choir, there were audible the softest, sweetest organ tones, rising, swelling to an almost unearthly harmony, then sinking to the merest melodious whisper. The organist, so the sacristan said, was rehearsing for a provincial Musical *Fest*, or convention, to be given in a week. The acoustic properties of the choir proved to be perfect. At last we took our seats in the stalls in order to enjoy this unexpected treat. The sun was shining brightly, and the fine old church — white pillared, white arched, and white groined — as seen across the great brass screen was radiant with a kind of shining purity of line, as it was filled with a corresponding purity of tone.

What was our surprise when, the music having ceased for a moment, we heard *America* roll forth from the organ loft, and awaken splendid echoes in the Groote Kerk of Dort! We five came to our feet as one, and remained standing while the organist gave us *Hail Columbia* — with full stops, I feel sure, for it fairly thundered in the upper reaches of the nave. We all broke into singing, and the two men kept time with their feet just as a vent for their patriotic fervor! Then came the grand choral, Luther's Hymn, *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott* — A sure stronghold our Lord is He — followed by *Nun danket Alle Gott*, and ending with the National Hymn of the Netherlands.

I think no happier party of Americans ever went forth of a June morning from the Great Church of Dordrecht.

Dear old Dort! We were loath to leave it: its Old Haven and New Haven, its Great Head Gate, its lovely old houses and their carved *poortjes*, its Wÿnstraat, where the casked Rhine wine that brought such riches to the old city stands no longer in the cellars, its Voorstraatshaven, and its steigers from which you catch a glimpse of the great tower. It was a trial to leave Zwÿndrecht, just across the ferry from St. Catherine's Gate, without seeing its dainty "Green" market once more. Fancy an old street leading direct from the ferry and shaded on one side by trees, its pavements, for the entire length and around the corner, laid with a bright and perfectly regular mosaic of willow baskets filled with bright red strawberries, darker raspberries, yellow and green *gurken* and early vegetables covered, in part, with fresh vine leaves!

But Zeeland and its islands, and the Captain were calling loudly to us to come. The Captain wrote that he would meet us within two days at Tholen, as his furlough began then, and he wanted the pleasure of giving every day to James and me. Ah, little he knew that that pleasure was to be heightened for him by our recent feminine edition of America! We had told the girls of his coming, and they were primed with curiosity. But we had said nothing to the Captain; we wanted to surprise him pleasantly. Moreover, Time would not

wait, not even in Holland, where apparently everything is perfectly willing to wait for something else.

The Broomstick was brought alongside the Merwe-Kade, immaculate from stem to stern;—these two parts of the ship, by the way, were ornamented with the live figurehead of a dog barking frantic welcome. There was a fine breeze; the Stars and Stripes floated from the mast-head; the burnt-sienna sail filled almost before Oom Kees poled her nose from the quay, and our host stood smiling farewell beneath the trees near the Great Head Gate. The two halves of the High Bridge were being hoisted in mid-air for a passing tjalk, and the carillon in the great tower was ringing nine, as we left the Merwe-Kade, and watched the beautiful old town fade, like a dream of Albert Cuyp's painting, into the eastern brightness of blended sea and sky.

"Dear old Dort!" Lois exclaimed, as she leaned to catch the last glimpse of that Great Head Gate, which bears the grand inscription on its façade: *Be Thou my keeper, O God Jehovah;* and "Dear old Dort!" we echoed.

In that, is said all that has been left unsaid.

CHAPTER XXIX

AT THE GATES OF THE SEA

EAST and southeast of Dordrecht, which is on an island, stretches that intricate network of water ways called The Biesbosch, or "reed-lands." All travellers from Dordrecht southward to Rosendaal and Antwerp pass this at a distance, and perhaps no better idea of the country as a whole can be had than from the train. This desolate stretch of reed-lands is, one may say, an hermaphrodite country — it is neither land nor water, yet it partakes of the nature of both; but where the land begins and the water ends, no one can say.

The great bridge that crosses the Hollandsche Diep, or Dutch Deeps, is also known to every traveller over the route above mentioned. This arm of the sea was made by an inundation in the fifteenth century, and it is a fitting introduction to the amphibious regions south of it—that are seen in part at ebb tide, and are invisible at the flood—which are known as the Verdronken Land—Drowned Land. Tholen, one of the islands of Zeeland, is the gate way to this region, desolate in itself, and pathetic in memory for the hundreds of thousands that have lost their lives in the great cataclysms of past centuries.

After leaving Dordrecht and passing through the Kil, we moored at Willemsdorp, for James and Ben wanted to see that great piece of engineering, the bridge over the Dutch Deeps, at close range. While we were there the weather grew thick, and the water so rough that Oom Kees struck and refused to pole *The Broomstick* so much as a foot from the wharf until it should clear. As all of us knew that this was the only wise thing to do in the circumstances, we overlooked this fit of insubordination which Neeltje assured us was not unprecedented in the annals of the craft. We left *The Broomstick* and her crew, including the two dogs, to wait for clearer sailing, and took the train to Bergen-op-Zoom, for the Captain was to meet us in Tholen the next day; from Bergen-op-Zoom one may reach that island by steam-tram and ferry in about forty minutes.

How pleasant it would be to hear once more, instead of the "Groote Kerks" in every town of the Netherlands, the old Catholic baptismal names belonging to these edifices! It is distinctive to speak of St. Lawrence, for instance; we see in it Rotterdam, the great tower, and the doves filling the air about it; of St. Peter's, we see Leyden and John Robinson's lonely burial place; of St. Mary's and St. Cunera's; they are memory's path-finders for Amersfoort and Rhenen. In Bergen-op-Zoom we find St. Gertrude's, with a parasitic growth all around it that obscures its beautiful lines. But the tower is a noble one, and dwarfs the roofs of the

whole town, which has lost its former glory and commercial importance.

The wind was heavy and prevented us from riding in comfort on the platform of the tram, which usually is provided with seats — a famous place for seeing the country-side. In this instance, however, there was little country-side to see — a windmill or two, some dykes, and now and then a low-roofed house. That was all until we steamed out upon the dyke and found ourselves on the shore of De Eendracht, the channel that separates North Brabant from Tholen.

I know nowhere in the Netherlands so lonely an approach by water as this same little ferry-way. The channel is not wide, and we were ferried across in so primitive a fashion that we realized at once we were in a, to us, strange land, and about to be introduced to another life. A rude raft, a rope for lever, a man for a walking windlass — that was the entire mechanism. The ferryman pulled across by sheer strength, walking back and forth and pulling at the rope hand over hand. I recalled that day in March when the Queen went down into the stricken land and crossed the same channel, which at that time was a wild sea by reason of the floods.

As we drew near to Tholen it looked as if it were recovering from a siege. Men were at work on the broken dykes; the water-gate had been carried away. The little village was saved only because the high dyke, on which the houses by the water-gate are built, did not

give way. If it had — there would now be another village beneath the sea, and new area added to the Verdronken Land, the waves of which at the present almost wash the feet of Tholen's dykes.

It has been my privilege to see the interiors of some of the homes of the Netherlands, and these homes chance to cover the whole sociological range of caste. From the Forest House in the woods of The Hague — an ideal royal residence, for it combines great magnificence with home-likeness — to the huts of Tholen is a far cry, and between the two the gamut of society ranges. I have seen the interior of a home of the nobility, of the rich banker, of the professional class, of the lower and upper middle classes, of the workingman, and of the Tholen fisherman; and it was in Tholen I found a courtesy and welcome that would have done credit to the Forest House in The Hague; it was in Tholen I found an old sacristan with the manners of the noble; it was in Tholen I found a simple folk not so intent on gain but that they could welcome a stranger because she was a stranger, and had come down to their stricken island to see them in their struggle for existence.

It saddened all of us — this life that is held by the strength of a dyke. The old church of Tholen, built in the early part of the thirteenth century, the old sacristan and his Spanish grandee manners, the sunken stones in the moist pavement on which the fourteenth century dates were scarcely legible, the desolation of the formerly

grand interior, the wind surging through the trees that grow close to its crumbling walls, were a prelude for our visit to Oud-Vosmeer, several miles farther down on the island and accessible by the highroad along the high dyke.

We drove along this dyke, that in March threatened to break in one or two places, in a wind so great that the trees swayed and bent beneath its force. This added to the desolation of the surrounding country. On our right, as far as the eye could see, was — desolation; not the desolation merely of homes, but the utter abomination of desolation that one may picture in imagination, yet which is rarely seen. The dykes that surround the great *polders*, or farm lands, sometimes miles in extent — for they are the lands reclaimed from the sea — were broken and rent in places. The double rows of trees on the dykes, that serve to hold the earth together by their roots and to give shade in summer, stretched for miles to the horizon, bare, and gaunt, and dead — not a twig, not a leaf, not a vine, not a spear of grass, nothing but sand and ooze, a deposit from the overwhelming sea. Once we passed a graveyard overgrown with sea rushes, that bent before the wind. On our left there was a portion of the country that showed some signs of vegetation, but it was feeble and struggling in the midst of sand and ooze. Not one living thing was visible; here and there a hedge, thick-set, showed its bare, brown, intricate anatomy of interwoven twigs. Once we saw a turf and

mud walled hut far below us in the *polder;* but there was no sign of life about it. We were silent, oppressed by what we saw.

Oud-Vosmeer in the north of Europe, and the villages on the slopes of Vesuvius at the south, were suffering at almost the same time; the one passing through deep waters, the other through the furnace of fiery ashes — and both just missing being buried beyond the hope of resurrection.

In the morning of that fateful March 12, 1906, when the different dykes gave way, the people fled in terror to the tops of them, thinking that there they would find safety; but the next tide was so furious in its onslaught that the water from the sea flowed over the tops of the remaining dykes where they had sought refuge, and then they were panic-stricken. The work of salvation was carried on day and night for days. The families, who were not taken from the dykes, were rescued from the upper part of the town hall, from the churches, and from their own garrets. They drove all their cattle onto the high dyke that held ; but when the sea rolled in upon and over them, only human life could be rescued; the cattle, horses, and sheep were all drowned, the hay carried away from the meadows, the barns floated off, the houses inundated, and in many cases undermined so that they fell. All this one may see if one goes to Oud-Vosmeer. We saw, too, the forsaken graveyard by the church; the hedge dead and

A BROKEN SEA GATE

OUD VOSMEER, MARCH 12-13, 1906

utterly stripped, the sand covering the gravestones deep beneath its drift. The illustration, from a photograph taken at the time, shows the Roman Catholic Church, the hayricks, and the parish house standing in the waters; the graveyard cannot be seen beneath them.

The illustration accompanying this chapter I have called *A Broken Sea Gate;* I do not wish it to be misleading, therefore I give a few words of explanation. The dykes that broke around Oud-Vosmeer were the earth-dykes, grown over with thick grass-turf and set with large trees, that serve to protect the *polders* from inundations. That inundation, however, that came in March was from the *sea*, and hence I have given to the illustration the title of a sea gate. Properly speaking, the sea gates are those great dykes of masonry and piles that border on the sea where there is a break in the land's natural defenses, the sand dunes. These may be seen on the coast at The Helder and at West Kapelle in Walcheren. But in so far as these dykes, of which the illustration shows one in the act of breaking and also of being overridden by the over-full sea, serve to keep out *sea* and not river water, I have permitted myself to name them sea gates. The great inundation of March 12 and 13, of this year, proved that the earth-dykes, hitherto considered a sure defense, are useless in times of great peril — and the peril is ever imminent! The fact, also, that the great dykes of masonry on the coast suffered, and were broken in some places, has

shaken the people's confidence. "Eternal Vigilance" must continue to be the watchword to the End — and in that End the sea will reclaim its own and this wonderful land cease to exist. This is written in the decrees of a natural Fate.

But even then, when overwhelmed and overmastered — and may it be ages distant! — this land will not have existed and lived, will not have toiled and suffered to preserve itself from becoming literally a Drowned Land, in vain; for its inheritance from the ages, and its legacy to the ages, remain the same: a love of country so intense, a patriotism that burns ever at such white flame of heat, that the words *Dutch* and *bravery*, both physical and moral, are, among nations, synonymous.

CHAPTER XXX

THE SWIMMING LION

It was with a feeling of positive relief, of freedom from a sense of physical oppression, that we drove back to Tholen. After such desolation, even that little village looked warm and thriving in the afternoon sun that was struggling to bring its head above the clouds and avert rain. It seemed typical to me, as I watched that struggle, of the heroic Swimming Lion in the arms of Zeeland, and a symbolization of Zeeland's device of triumphant desperation: *I struggle and emerge.*

And, to my inward satisfaction, the sun did break through and showed us, standing in bold relief against the dark doorway of the unpretentious little inn, *Hof van Holland*, the Captain! He had been able to get away on the afternoon train instead of the next morning's.

It was a joyful meeting, and a surprise all around. I must confess I took real pride in introducing him to Lou and Lois, and enjoying the Captain's surprise which he was too well-bred to show. It seemed to me I never realized before how very charming Lois could be with strangers, and how very well she dresses; and as for Lou — why, she is, I have to own up to it, really handsome, with a stately, statuesque kind of beauty that, although

it is dulled in Lois' presence on account of the latter's great charm of manner, nevertheless is very attractive in its way. But she is as quiet as Lois is vivacious. I saw the Captain did not know just whom to turn to first; James helped him out with an introduction to Ben.

It was a merry party that sat down to supper in the quaint dining-room of the inn, and the staid Dutchmen and Dutchwomen, who ate with us, must have felt some curiosity as to the cause of the gayety, but they were too well-bred to show any. They had fish — a great porcelain dish of fish; and one and all carefully laid the big bones back upon that self-same dish. They had potatoes, also, and beer; they ate with the gravity of burgomasters, and called again for fish which was brought in, piled high upon the porcelain "drainers." That was their supper. Ours was a huge roast of veal, young garden beans, tea, bread and butter, and thin delicate *crêpes*, or pancakes the thickness of a knife, with fresh raspberries and sugar, which we were expected to mash and lay inside the crêpes. We met all the expectations in a truly generous manner, and satisfied our charming little hostess, who served us herself, and ourselves as well.

We debated whether to stay in Tholen for the night, or go over to Bergen-op-Zoom; but decided for the former as, if it were clear, we knew *The Broomstick* would make her appearance without fail early the next day, and we did not want any delay. Not that I would advise

anyone who has a sensitive nose to stay long in Tholen. The oyster beds are something to avoid — as well as the Zeeland oysters; and the drainage of the town is far from sanitary inspection. However, we made the best of it, and by nine the next morning Oom Kees signalled us from the Eendracht.

By ten we were off for Zierikzee in Schouwen.

Of course it would be a mere figure of speech to say that Oom Kees' foot was on its native heath or even land, for, so far as I could discover, most of the land was water. But I may say that he was brimming over with information about every foot of the *raks*, and *gats*, *vaarts*, and *kreeks* which serve for water-streets and lanes, squares and boulevards throughout this part of Zeeland. The water was somewhat rough and the sky not wholly clear, as we sailed over a portion of that ancient "Drowned Land." The Captain told us that with a low tide, perfectly calm water, which is rare hereabouts, and a clear unclouded sky, in the waters about Tholen, deep beneath the flood there is a graveyard, the stones of which may still be seen when the combination of tide and wind and sky permits.

"Have you seen it?" Lois asked, her bright face quickened into a fine expression of sympathy.

"Yes," he replied; "once in the calm waters which told no tales."

We were silent; knowing we were passing over the engulfed villages and the deep-sea graves of unnumbered

thousands. We were glad to sail away from it all, past Stavenisse with a glimpse of St. Philips-land and westerly past the shores of Duiveland. Yet all about us were evidences of the recent devastation: broken dykes were being mended; here and there was an abandoned farmhouse, shallows where once were the richest farms in the Netherlands, and stretching away to the southeast the mud flats of the Drowned Land miles in extent.

But our spirits revived as we approached Zierikzee. According to Oom Kees—it was his native place—it is the best place on earth for a man to be born in, to live in, and to die in. Lois said she felt as if we were on the outer edge of the world and should drop over if we went another mile. All about us were silent green meadows; the long canal that is the approach to the town leads between them, bordered as they are with the ever-present dykes. Tern were numerous; and if the silence was broken at all, it was by their curious cry. We saw nothing ahead of us, and were not prepared for the charming picture made by the South-Haven Gate as we entered the harbor. On the quay stood the nephew-captain's mother, in all the bravery of her great cap and fine apron, ready to welcome us; indeed, everybody welcomed us, from the landlord of the good inn to Oom Kees' pretty granddaughter who was on the quay with some other girls.

All I have to say is: If anyone is desirous of seeing something utterly other-worldly, wholly peaceful, wholly

SOUTH HARBOR GATE

ZIERIKZEE

restful, let him go to Zierikzee! I don't think I should advise a long stay there; it is too out of the world, too reminiscent of the Swimming Lion and his struggles to keep his noble head above water;—our landlord told me that had the high dyke given way, as they feared, or another tide increased the flood, Zierikzee would have gone under for good and all.

Lovely Zierikzee! How could we have spared you and your frisky gem of architecture they dignify with the name of Stadhuis? How could we have missed your carillon that rings all its bells on the outside of the Stadhuis belfry? Where else in all the world could we have seen a barrel-vaulted wooden garret in the Town Hall, and an Eskimo and his long skin *kayak* swung aloft therein? Who else but the delightful custodian would assure us that in the fifteenth century (that special period of time I found to be a safe refuge for all the Dutch who told marvellous historical yarns) this same canoe came into Zierikzee harbor paddled by a man who is now represented swung aloft in the very canoe itself by a modern dummy?

Where else can one find such a harbor-gate? Where else such a Nobel Poort? Where else such an Oom Kees to tell the story of the two ladies Nobel, the one Anna, the other Maria, who wished to erect a gate in their beloved Zierikzee, and gave the Nobelpoort, thus memorializing themselves in a most notable way? Who else but Oom Kees with the fingers of his right hand

raised would solemnly tell you that Anna was crooked and that Maria was straight as an arrow, and that the crooked Anna memorialized herself in the left-hand crooked tower, as you may see when you go out by that same gate, and that the sister Maria memorialized her own particular straightness by the other erect and rigid one? All this in the fifteenth century be it understood! A safe old pigeon-hole for archives — that same fourteen hundred. Where else could you see such locks and real gates to be shut at night for the defense of the sea-girt town?

And where else in all this world could one find an incipient rival to Strasburg Cathedral's great tower! For such is the case here in Zierikzee. This town possesses a church and tower that, had it been finished after Architect Keldermans' designs, would have been the twin for grandeur and grace and noble beauty of that other in Strasburg by the Rhine.

This is the so-called Monster Tower of St. Lieven's, and beside it Leeuwarden's *Oldhove* would look like a pygmy, and Our Dear Lady Tower at Amersfoort like a pine needle. It was to have been something over six hundred feet high. Picture a Washington Monument, with an added hundred feet, beginning as a tower of enormous bulk instead of a shaft, and you will have an idea of the monster tower designed by Architect Keldermans. The drawings for the completed tower were shown us in the Stadhuis; had it ever been finished there would not have

been its equal and like in the world. And to this, little Zierikzee in the island of Schouwen aspired long centuries ago! At present the Department of Marine have decided to add another seventy feet to the tower as it stands, and place a large beacon light on it. It will be a coast mark for miles around.

I saw that the Captain was enjoying to the full our appreciation of his wonderful little land, and especially Lois' enthusiasm over everything Dutch — caps, costumes, towers, gates, *gats* and *raks*, boats, small boys dressed like grown-up men, and little girls a copy in miniature of their mothers. As I said to James, "It's dangerous for the Captain, I admit, but the Dutch are so slow about making up their minds, that we shall be off and away before he has had time to find out that he is captivated. Anyway, Ben is all right." To which James replied:

"Umph! You don't know Ben."

It was really delightful to see how that girl drew the Captain out; and he wasn't even aware of it! He is so modest that he would never dream of saying much about himself, his likes or dislikes. But with Lois he was ready to tell story after story about his youth and about his country, the people he knew, and his plans to visit America where he had already been. Somehow, it came to be the expected thing that Lois, Lump, and the Captain, chaperoned by Lou, would go off exploring by themselves, and James, Ben, Bizzy, and I be left to wander at our

own sweet wills! But Ben didn't seem to mind it. I was grateful for this, for otherwise it would have spoiled much of my pleasure in this unroutine-like sightseeing.

We were sorry to bid good-bye to Zierikzee in Duiveland, but the Captain bade us be of good cheer for the best was to come. After sailing away from this charming town we could hardly believe him that we should see greater beauty in Walcheren. But what he said proved to be true. We sailed by the *Engelschevaart*, crossing the East Scheldt and entering the passage between two portions of Beveland, catching glimpses on the way of St. Philips-land, of Tholen, and the Verdronken-Land to the southeast.

The world all about us was a water world. Here and there we saw the mussel fishing-boats on the shallows below the dykes. Once we sailed over shoals where three years ago were the rich farmlands of a prosperous farmer. Now the house stands empty, half a ruin as well as the barns; the waters at high tide wash the threshold; and almost within stone's throw of our deck a broken dyke told the pathetic story. Oom Kees related, that one day in crossing this place by another channel, as he was sitting by the tiller, his back to the dyke, he heard a deafening, grinding roar, and suddenly the sea surged all about him. He turned to this dyke, and saw that a large portion of it had crumbled and fallen into the sea — undermined by the ever-gnawing tides.

Here and there a sea-dog rose to the surface and, lifting his shining head above the water, looked about him slowly and deliberately. Sometimes we saw these creatures on the sand flats at the base of the dyke. Above us spread a pale blue sky; all about us were shoals and deeps, the one light green, the other dark blue — sea and dykes, sea-dogs and crying gulls, green stretches behind the dykes, and hardly a sign of human life in all that day's course!

We approached Veere as in a dream — and perhaps the approach to no other place in the Netherlands has such dream-like characteristics.

The approach to Alkmaar is an inland-water approach, narrowed to an artificial canal; the approach to Gorinchem is spacious with a river-space, and in the midst of cultivated lands and human habitations. But this approach to Veere from the sea is unbounded except by the sea, and nowhere is the wonderful atmospheric effect of blended sky and waters and luminous half-lights more in evidence than on these coasts, these outposts of the sea-islands of the Netherlands.

The word *fane* may in all truth be applied to the neglected church of Veere. If I had been told that what I saw over the waters was some dream-city, some Dutch *Kubla Khan*, I could well have believed it. Veere is unreal in its beauty, as seen from the sea. Its sea-front, the glory of which has long since departed, offers, with the noble Scotch warehouse on the dilapidated quay, a

pathetic reminder of the centuries when its civic state was the proudest in the land. It is best to pass it as a dream; to sail on past its ancient wharves, its grand warehouses, its exquisite Stadhuis Tower — a mixture of Spanish bulb and muezzin tower — its grandly desolate shrine, its ancient walls and, sailing on into the canal that leads straight across Walcheren to Middelburg, remember it as a dream of past centuries: a dream that, by chance, you have seen emerging from the waters, and fading away as it is submerged in the evening mists coming in from the sea; that is, remember it as such until you see it a second time as we did.

The Lion of the Netherlands! He is a noble beast; a noble symbol of a noble land; but nowhere will you see him in such grandeur of struggle as just here, where you find him swimming for life, and struggling to keep his noble head above the engulfing waves of this ancient Zeeland, sea-land in truth! A brave device: *Luctor et emergo.*

CHAPTER XXXI

THE BELLS OF MIDDELBURG

THEY rang us in and they rang us out, and their echoes will ring in memory until we hear them again in reality — as sometime we mean to.

We heard them chiming faintly afar off as we approached Middelburg by the canal, and we heard them ringing more and more loudly, more and more joyfully, as we put ourselves into the hotel omnibus and jolted away over the heavy pavements of the capital of Zeeland on the island of Walcheren. They never once stopped ringing, as we drove first through a narrow walled passage, then an old-time portal, and found ourselves in a large irregularly rounded court, open to the sky, surrounded by the walls of the ancient Abbey of St. Nicholas, and filled with magnificent trees: lindens, elms, and acacias. As we got out at the Abbey Inn, they were still ringing and filling all that great green court with joyous trinkles, and trills, and trickles, and runs of melody. It was Mendelssohn's *Spring Song* that the chimes of Long John, the ancient tower of the New Church, incorporated with the Abbey, were dropping down upon us in a continuous musical shower.

We declared then and there that nothing could induce

us to leave this spot for two weeks — and nothing did! Its charm is so great that you lose all care for "antiques," for Groote Kerks, Town Halls, Market-Places, for history with a big H, — for everything, in fact, but for that lovely old Abbey of St. Nicholas, its court set with great trees, its many towers, its dim cloisters, its grand old gates, its quiet inn — a part of the Abbey — and those wonderful chimes that ring at all hours of the day and night; that talk to you at intervals of seven minutes throughout the twenty-four hours; that whisper to you in your sleep, and chat with you in broad daylight! This is not exaggeration, neither is it a figure of speech, — it is the truth of the actual.

I came to have a real affection for *de lange Jan;* his personality is a pleasing one outwardly, his voice never monotonous — and he has always something to say, although you would not call him garrulous. Nothing I can write would do justice to the loveliness of this musical chat and gossip. It must be heard to be not only appreciated, but believed, and a volume of description would fail to convey a true idea of its variety and charm. We arrived in the midst of the *Spring Song;* we went to sleep with *I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls* ringing all its chromatics in our ears; we awoke to the tune of *La Fille de Madame Angot* gayly urging us to be up and about in the bright June morning.

Lou spoke our minds as we sat at breakfast, and Long John broke into a little gurgle that sounded queerly

enough from his wide-throated bells. "I'm thankful such a place as Middelburg and its Abbey exists, and that I'm alive to enjoy it!" she exclaimed.

This was unwonted enthusiasm on Lou's part, who effervesces seldom, and rarely in the presence of a stranger. I noticed the Captain fairly beamed upon her, and said with great earnestness: "But I told you so!"

Middelburg shows more than any other city or town the influence of the Spanish occupation. It is Dutch to the marrow in sentiment, but it is half Spanish in temperament; by temperament I mean the manners of its people, the fashion of its churches and towers, the ornamentation of its homes, the general gayety and delight in the "joy of living" that shows so plainly among its citizens. I can conceive no greater contrast of feature and expression, of costume and gait, than one sees in comparing a Scheveningen fisherman's wife and a Middelburg farmer's *vrouw*, or a Scheveningen fisher himself and a Zeeland sailor. The one is gravely earnest, with hard lines of toil about a rather stern mouth and eyes; the other round, merry, happy-go-lucky and well-to-do. The one dressed soberly with only a sparse ornament of silver or gold; the other revelling in bodice, gay shawl, fringes, white chemisette, gold beads, silver buckles, silver buttons, silver chains — the last three for both men and women. The one is the Puritan type, the other the Spanish cavalier; the one a toiler for

wages for existence merely, the other a good liver with a reserve chest, and cattle to boot. The Scheveningen woman drags her cart or pushes it before her; the Walcheren peasant wife rides in her own gayly painted farm wagon, and is drawn by her own sturdy Zeeland mares.

This atmosphere, social and domestic, makes itself felt with all who remain even a short time on this island, and especially in Middelburg. After poor Tholen and Oud-Vosmeer, it was a relief to see something of this other life, and we entered into it with heartiness and pure enjoyment. There was a new delight for every day. Each went his or her own way, or we went by twos and threes, or all together, but, as a rule, we met at some hour of the day beneath the trees in the Abbey Court, or in the Market-Place in front of the Stadhuis. Middelburg streets are circles in the old parts of the town, and, on account of this peculiar plan — a result of building the streets around the Abbey, which is circular in form, as a nucleus — one can never stray far without running across an acquaintance.

James bought a camp-stool, and could generally be found in front of the Stadhuis studying its every detail and making sketches. There never was such a Stadhuis anywhere else in the Middle Ages, and I am quite sure there is not another city that can show one like it in modern times. It is really the most exquisite thing in architecture I have ever seen. It is own little cousin to the Hôtel de Ville in Brussels, and, in my eyes, more

original in conception and richer in detail; it is full of architectural surprises, but they never detract from the symmetry of proportion. The interior is as beautiful in its way as the exterior, and the rooms contain some wood-carvings worth a long journey thither to see. You may see here, if historically inclined and an admirer of William the Silent, his own signature, and near it the Duke of Alva's book of bloody orders in cipher of his own handwriting and signed by him.

Here, too, you may see one of the oldest documents in the Dutch language — a charter granted to Middelburg by an ancient German king, William of Holland, a contemporary of Simon of Monfort in England and of The Low Dyke at Domburg, farther down on the island of Walcheren, which dates from 1253 — the date of Middelburg's rise in the world.

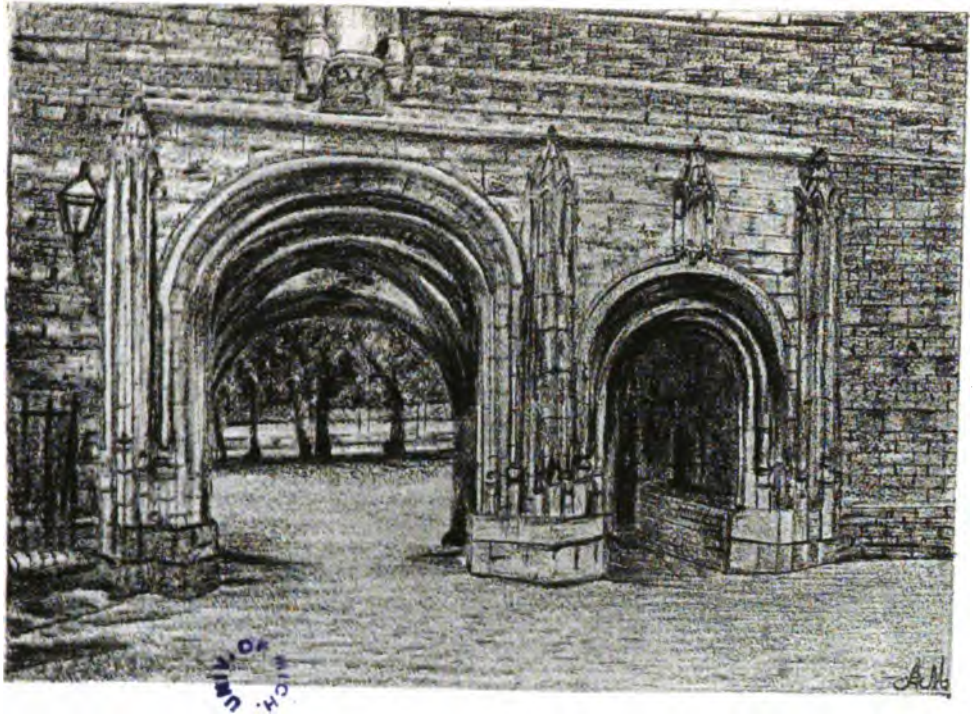
Lou, having developed an "antiquity" fad, could be found very often in that fascinating house-shop, near the old *Shutterhof* of *St. Sebastian*, revelling in the treasures collected there from Zeeland, and particularly North Brabant. Very often the Captain was with her, as he is an antiquary himself and the best person to consult before making a purchase. Lou has an ample income of her own and can indulge her tastes in this direction. But oftener he was with Lois, who led him a chase all over the island from Veere to Domburg and West Kapelle. At first Lou was always with them, I supposed for chaperone, although neither of them needed one,

being gentle-people, as they are; but for custom's sake, I was glad Lou was on hand. After a week, however, she had some excuse or other to let them go without her, and in consequence I was pressed into service. I can't say I liked it, for it did seem rather mean to Ben, who was our guest; but he seemed to be enjoying himself thoroughly, was always ready to go with us, or to sail with Oom Kees the length and breadth of the island, to fish with him and smoke with him at all times of day. And the long days were all too short! Lois said she could accomplish twice as much "good times" in Zeeland as in any other place, because of the long, long twilights — and I am sure she made the most of them!

For my own part I never tired of walking out of one of the Abbey Gates, around the circle of the Lange Delft to the ancient Balans and its nowhere-to-be-matched houses, and of walking in through another. The delight was always the same to enter the dark shadows of the ancient gateway and emerge into the green-filled court; to sit down beneath my special acacia, and, while listening to the chimes of *lange Jan*, watch the sunshine — and we had two weeks of it — filter through the light green foliage of the acacias and glance on the white cap of a peasant woman, or glisten on her gold cap-pins, as she passed me with her basket of butter overlaid with white linen.

The Butter-Market of Middelburg is, I am sure,

THE ABBEY GATE


UNIV. OF MICH.

unlike any other butter-market in the entire civilized world. Nowhere else will you find such a setting.

Come with me out through the Abbey Gate that leads to the Balans, and follow the Lange Burg for two minutes till you come to another gate of the Abbey. Just opposite you will find an open, three-sided, walled court with colonnades, like Vasari's Loggia in Florence where the ancient Tuscan fish-wives used to sell their wares. An iron fence separates this court from the Lange Burg. Enter through the iron gate, and you find yourself on the pavements of the court from the middle of which an enormous linden rises and spreads abroad its branches like a great green tent that canopies the whole yard. Enter the arcades; they are dim and sweet and cool; the butter-vendors, a hundred or more in their white caps, — not their Sunday best, — are ranged on long low benches against the walls, their baskets of pale yellow butter, unsalted and freshly churned, are on their laps, or at their feet covered with white linen or leaves. Here and there are huge creels of eggs, and all about and around are hundreds of the white-capped good-wives of Middelburg, intent on buying. It is a pretty sight and one not to be found elsewhere. From twelve to one on Butter-Market day Long John plays all the tunes in his full repertory.

James and I found out the fish-market by chance one day late in the afternoon. That, too, was an arcade, and within were the fish-wives and their wares. They auction

off much of their fish, and it was curious to hear and see the manner of barter. Contrary to our bidding, the first offer is set at the highest price by the auctioneer, and little by little he lowers it until some one of the intending buyers flings a fish-net bag at him, which indicates that the purchaser is willing to pay the price offered! Sometimes, perhaps most frequently, they throw coarse blue and white linen bags, and as the auction proceeds rapidly there is, in consequence, some lively doings, and a constant fusillade of bags and nets.

We shall not soon forget the band concert in the old Shutterhof gardens of St. Sebastian; nor can we forget a dinner in the inn at which were present some twenty worthy burgomasters of Zeeland and Zeeland-Flanders. They were Dutch burgomasters, and might have served as models for Frans Hals, for Ferdinand Bol and Van der Helst! I recall especially the burgomaster of Terneuzen — a fine-looking man of middle age, his hair cut square across his forehead, his features strong and fine, his expression earnest, his carriage dignity itself. It was a Van Scorel type of face, or such as Holbein shows us sometimes when he portrays the worthy dignitary in office. His wife and daughter were with him at another time, and I have never seen such costumes as they wore. They were in gala attire: full stiff petticoats, rich bodice, low neck, short sleeves, and around the line of the neck a peculiar adjustment of material, richly wrought in colors, that stood out from the shoulders like

a huge pair of triangular wings; these appendages rose almost as high as their ears. Their necks were loaded with chains set with real jewels; their caps stiff-winged and white; their gold pins heavy and elaborate, the spirals were like small bed-springs and depending from them were the ear-jewels which dangled about their eyes and temples. It was a rich costume as well as a curious one, and was worn with a dignity of ease that showed how many generations had gone to the making and wearing of it.

Turn where you will in Middelburg there is always something to rejoice the eye. The dry dock with a great East Indiaman on the ways, and Long John towering two hundred and eighty feet just behind the masts, is a fine sight at sundown! The old Cow Gate, too, and the green waters of a quiet canal that runs beside it, and mother-duck and ducklings manœuvring about in them, are small things in themselves, but belong wholly to Middelburg.

There is an indescribable charm about this island city. It lays hold upon you in numberless ways, until you say, and with truth, "there is none such," and give to it your entire Dutch allegiance and your true American affection. After seeing it, after living a short time in it, the conviction grows upon you that somehow, somewhere you have seen this lovely spot before, especially the precincts of the Abbey — whether in story, in poem, in imagination, in a dream, or in a preëxistent

state, you may not say; but seen it you have, and made of it an ideal that, at last, you have lived to realize. The chimes force this conviction upon you and foster such belief, for they are the sweetest bells one can imagine. There are forty-one of them, and, if you ascend to the belfry, you may read on their brazen throats a word or two in Latin, which they make articulate in ringing tones, such as, "I praise Thee, O Lord."

Often of a summer night, as I lay awake listening to the breeze stirring among the acacias, that almost touched my windows, I could hear two or three little bells ring faintly with an irregular babbling tinkle as if murmuring in some dream. Sometimes there would rouse up a giant deep-throated bell and boom out just one stroke — a sound as if some deep-voiced century in the Middle Ages had called over the abyss of Time to the Present, and itself to remembrance. Now and then a whole set of smaller bells would ripple out and run the scale higher and higher as if chasing each other up the belfry ladders; and again the whole forty-one would break forth into the *Spring Song*, and fill the night with harmony. Often I have fallen asleep "in marble halls" and waked only to find I was being put through the same musical process, and rarely, and fortunately so, all the bells got woefully mixed and there followed a medley of chaotic cadences with no tune at all distinguishable. I remember one painful hitch in *Madame Angot* that held everybody in suspense until

it was safely adjusted — evidently to Long John's entire satisfaction, for, after the suspense was over, he flung the chorus of that opera about on the night air as recklessly as a Japanese juggler throws his glass balls.

I was expatiating to James on the loveliness and chumminess of these bells one day, at the end of our two weeks when we had gone over to Veere to see those marvels of engineering, the great iron sluice-gates that keep the sea from flooding the island. We were waiting for the little steamer from Zierikzee. James was lying on the grass, his arms under his head, and I was sitting beside him, watching a lark soar and circle and sing above the green island-meadows. The tinkle of his song recalled the bells, and I spoke, as I did often, in their praise. I was greeted with a roar of laughter from James, and was amazed to see him roll over face downwards in the grass.

"Why, James Moulton, what are you laughing at so?" I demanded. It was really trying to have my little flight of sentiment met with such uproarious laughter.

"Oh, my!" he fairly groaned; "if you did but know it, your Long John has been planning a match, and you're likely to hear them as marriage bells before you're many weeks older."

For answer I shook him and made him turn over. "Now tell me what you mean, James, and be rational about it. Do you mean that Ben and Lois are going to make up?"

"Ben and Lois? Umph, you don't know Ben."

"Well, my dear, you have said that thing enough times for me *not* to know him; now are you satisfied? What I want to know is, what you mean by your insinuation about wedding bells."

"Haven't you noticed anything?" he said, sitting up and facing me.

"You mean about the Captain, James?" He nodded.

"Well, I'd like to know who could help noticing. He has been perfectly devoted to her ever since they met on *The Broomstick*."

"Her, who?"

"Why, Lois, of course; who else? What do you think of it, James? I really am getting dreadfully worried about the whole thing, especially Ben."

"You let Ben alone; you needn't worry about him. Ben can take care of himself," was the truly masculine response which left me entirely in the dark. "Your nice little plan hasn't seemed to work," he added, a little maliciously.

"What plan?"

"Your match-making between Lois and the Captain."

"But you haven't given them time." Upon this my husband fell to laughing immoderately again, and I undertook to enlighten him on certain points on which the masculine intelligence is apt to prove obtuse.

"Now, James, I have something to tell you that has been weighing on my mind for fourteen days."

"Go ahead."

"Do you believe in love at first sight?"

"Ye-es; but I believe more in it at second sight."

"James, stop teasing this minute, and tell me if you have noticed anything queer about Lou, lately."

"Lou? No, only that she is a fine-looking woman and young for her age."

"She's fallen in love, James, and at first sight, too —." James whistled. "— And of course she's too old to show it as a young girl would, but I know it's gone deep — and I feel dreadfully about it; it does seem as if it were all my fault. *Do* help me."

"Oh, don't worry about Lou, Persis; she's old enough to look out for herself." Then he began to laugh again, or rather chuckle to himself.

"Now, James, I call that downright hard-hearted! As if Lou hadn't deep feelings just because she is forty! — And I wish you'd stop laughing and tell me what there is in my speech that excites this risibility on your part." I confess I was a little tried to find James so unsympathetic; for, even if it had been my fault in the first place in inviting Lou over, there was no need of my husband's deserting me at the crucial moment.

"Well, I'll tell you, Persis but — word of honor, now, it goes no farther?" I laid my hand on my heart, and James always takes that on my part as a mason's oath. He interrupted himself with another chuckle.

"— The fact is that last evening, after the band concert

in the Schutterhof garden, the Captain took me aside, and, with the manners of an ambassador, asked my permission, as masculine representative and relative of Lou on this side of the water, to pay his addresses to her with intention of speedy marriage! — Now what do you say to Dutch slowness in making up their minds, eh?"

"Oh, James!" Really it was all I had breath for.

"Yes; and he intimated that if his suit were successful — and he didn't seem to have much doubt about that part (darn their foreign conceit!) — he would like the marriage to take place before we leave The Hague!"

"Gracious, James!"

"Yes; and he intimated pretty strongly that there would be no need of a *dot*, as he was well provided with this world's goods, but if she had an income of her own, it would be agreeable to him in case of issue!"

"For pity's sake, James, what next?"

"Yes; and he said it would be necessary to produce her baptismal certificate, and her mother's marriage certificate, and I don't know but what he said her grandmother's certificate of birth and her own!"

"Oh, James!"

"Yes; and a lot more red tape that I didn't listen to, for I was so confounded with the suddenness of the whole thing."

"What *did* you tell him, James?" My husband began to laugh again, and immoderately, before he could answer.

"I told him to 'go in and win.' But he looked so puzzled — evidently he didn't understand the entire significance of that phrase — that I mounted my high horse of etiquette, and told him the honor he had conferred on our family by seeking such a connection was thoroughly appreciated by me, as representative-relative for Lou while she is with us, and that he had my full and free permission to make such advances with a view to matrimony; that all legalities, papers, certificates, etc., would be at once attended to, and that I hoped to have the great honor of shaking his hand in the near future as a cousin."

"Good for you, James, that was fine!"

"Yes, I thought I rose to the occasion fairly well." (Oh, the conceit of man!) "But, Persis, I've laughed as often since last night as Long John has rung his bells at the humor of the whole thing — *I* asked permission by anybody to court Lou, and she forty! Oh, but that's rich!"

"What *do* you suppose Lois will say?" was my next question.

"I think her pretty nose will be well out of joint, and I'm glad of it," he added, savagely. "She played fast and loose with Ben, and now she's met her match in the Captain. An all-round fine man he is too, and I'm glad enough to welcome him to our family, if he is a foreigner — 'a man's a man for a' that.'"

"James!" I broke out suddenly, as is my way

when, as James says, my thoughts get switched off onto another track, "would you mind if I just hinted to Ben how things stand —"

James jumped to his feet, thrust both hands in his pockets, and became suddenly masterful. "Now, Persis, remember you have given your word to me, — and remember, too, that I'm managing this thing; you're not in it this time."

Of course there was nothing to be said after that — but he couldn't prevent me thinking my thoughts, thank fortune!

The steamer was approaching the great gates, and the men were laboriously at work opening them. The desolate fane of Veere stood out against the bright west like a beautiful etching, and the exquisite Stadhuis tower let fall its tinkling carillon as we boarded the steamer. As it moved from the wall of the lock the lark was still singing above the island meadows, and the tiny steep-pitched roofs beyond the bastions glowed bright red in the sunlight. We left this ancient port and its memories of past glory, and took our straight course again to Middelburg where, upon our arrival, we found all our party at the quay. Lou was looking very handsome and happy with a great bunch of white roses in her hand, and a suspicion of the Netherlands' colors in her afternoon gown. Seeing which, I nudged James and whispered that the Captain had not let any grass grow upon his

"gracious permission." I wondered if Ben saw anything of this.

That evening we changed our plans, and decided to remain another week in the capital of Zeeland. Indeed, it held us; we could not have left had we wished to — and we had no desire to remove ourselves beyond the sound of its sweet bells and its green Abbey Court. As we were discussing plans for seeing the island of Walcheren during the next week, Ben surprised us by saying that, as his time was limited, he had decided to take a trip into North Holland and see some of the cities of which we had spoken with such enthusiasm. Possibly he would meet us again at The Hague, whither we were going for a week to close the house, and bid good-bye to our Tryntje, Anna Engelina, and a few other faithful friends in the capital of the Netherlands.

Upon this announcement, I immediately comprehended the situation. James was party to his going and was "managing things himself." I decided it was wiser to express my sincere regrets and refrain from urging Ben to stay. But I wondered what Lois would say. As a matter of fact, she said nothing; but, during the rest of the evening, was the gayest of the gay, and acted precisely as if his going were a source of hidden joy to her. I felt like shaking her!

Our last evening all together in Middelburg was a merry one and Long John outdid himself, for, as we sat

at the round tables outside the Abbey Inn and ate our late supper of delicious shrimp croquettes, bread and butter, tea and strawberries, he ranged the gamut and gave us all his tunes in quick succession with broken phrases of melody thrown in pell-mell, interrupting our merry chat with his tinkles, and runs, and gurgles, and crash of chords, and quenching us wholly in a deafening booming fusillade at twelve, midnight.

Oh, the bells of Middelburg! Long may their sweet *Spring Song* fill the green Abbey Court of St. Nicholas with cheerful melody! Long may its echoes resound among the double-groined arches of the dim, beautiful cloisters, and its mid-air harmonies continue to float above the surrounding Towers of Middelburg!

MIDDELBURG TOWERS

CHAPTER XXXII

HARKING BACK TO CAESAR

THREE weeks would not suffice for the artist, the historian, the archæologist, the mere summer-dreamer in Middelburg. The town is too rich in historical associations, too charming from an artistic standpoint, too interesting, as the record of the Ages, to antiquaries, too perfect as a resting-place for the summer months to leave, after a short stay, with any degree of satisfaction.

The Abbey of St. Nicholas alone may claim a week — and one calls it well spent. It is most interesting, historically and architecturally. Its gates are different in style, and all of them beautiful. Its towers are unique; its irregular circle of buildings affords constant surprises; the carvings and sculptures on its walls are like a missal in stone, and the gay shutters to its windows, in connection with the time-worn walls, produce a charming effect. These shutters are to be seen all over Middelburg, and they lend to the little city a brightness that bespeaks a southern temperament in the introducer of them as a municipal ornament. This shutter of wood is painted vermilion and white, in four triangles that have a common centre; two of these triangles are red and the other two white. I can conceive of no

lovelier combination than the walls of the Abbey seen between the great trees of its court, and enlivened by this multitude of richly-colored shutters that shield the fascinating little dormers as well as the larger windows. Add to this the six towers that shoot their pinnacles above the tops of the elms and acacias, seeming to aspire to Long John, who rises, rich in bells and fantastic trappings, like a Spanish hidalgo, two hundred feet above them, and you may form some idea of the unique charm of this place that captivates all who rest for a night within its walls.

Over one of the Abbey gates is cut in stone this proud device:

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The Senate and the People of Middelburg — a copy, with all the importance of a small city's dignity, of those old Roman initials that hark back to Caesar: THE SENATE AND THE PEOPLE OF ROME!

Who shall say, after reading this on the walls of Middelburg's pious heart, that the Dutch are not aware of their own municipal dignity?

We smiled as we read it one morning, for it did seem such a far cry from little Middelburg to the Roman Republic; but an hour or two later we had good and sufficient reason to change our minds, and to feel that Rome with its grandeur was not such a very distant connection of this same little Dutch capital.

We came across in Wagenaar Straat the rooms of the

Zeeland Scientific Society, and to the courteous curator we owe much of our enlightenment in regard to the Roman "finds" near Middelburg on the coast of Walcheren. These finds bring one very near to that same Roman Empire-Republic, and, after examining them, a trip to Domburg down on the island is full of interest.

Motley, in his introduction to *The Rise of the Dutch Republic*, says: "These islands [meaning the islands of Zeeland] were not known to the Romans." I may not dispute John Lothrop Motley, for I am an ignoramus, and he is a charming erudite; but this was written many years ago, and there has been found since then such indubitable evidence of Roman occupation on this island, at least, that with the small map, which the curator made with his own hand and gave to me, and the evidence of our four eyes, James' and mine, to prove that the "finds" are real, I may, perhaps, be permitted to write a few words on this subject, which both of us found intensely interesting, without arrogating to myself either the knowledge or the privilege of the historian and archæologist.

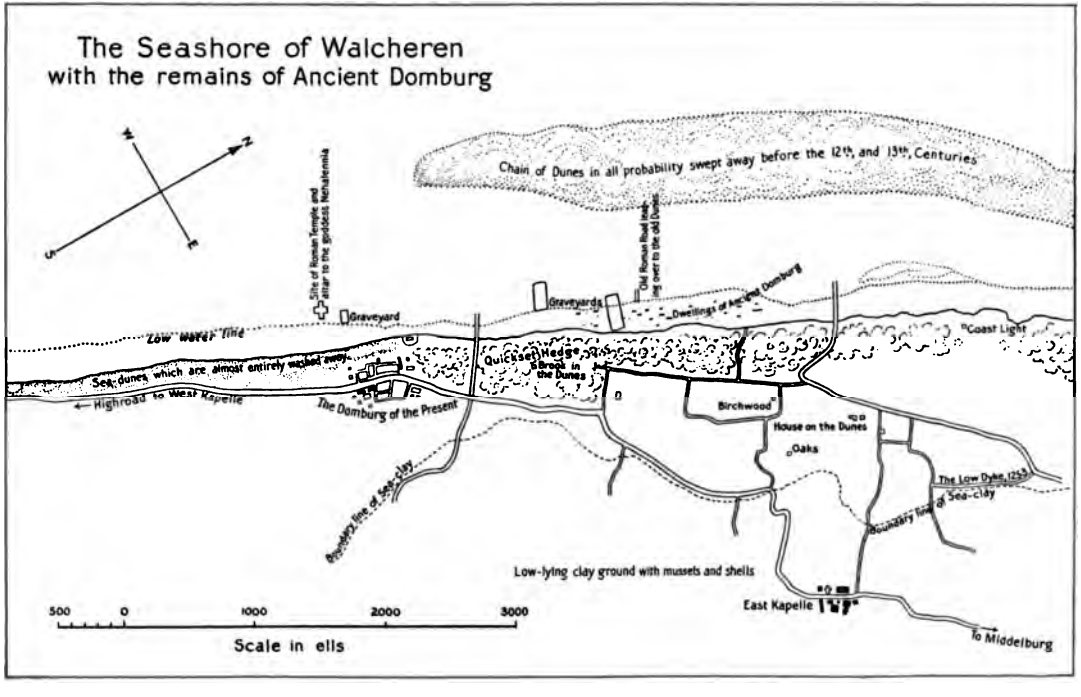
The steam-tram runs down to Domburg — the jumping-off place for the southern part of the Netherlands. The journey is made in something like forty-five minutes, and every foot of the way is full of interest. There are many little towns along the route, and the island life and the island costumes are seen in full force and glory — for the whole population turns out to meet

the train, the event of the day in these isolated places. After passing West Kapelle we soon come to Domburg, at present a small sea-coast hamlet which is struggling into prominence as a summer resort — save the name and the place!

Burg signifies primarily stronghold or citadel, and *Dom* signifies cathedral or minster; but the citadel was often incorporated in the city and the minster of old was the temple; hence we find in *Domburg*, The City of the Temple. The topography of Ancient Domburg, plus the "finds" to be seen in the rooms of the Society, lead to the conclusion that in Roman times there was here on this desolate coast — not far from the shores of France and England — a Roman city and Roman Temple.

If the reader will turn to the Plan of Ancient Domburg, he will see at once the reason for this statement. It shows the sea-shore of the Island of Walcheren and the remains of an ancient Domburg, long lost beneath the waves, and the site of the old Roman Temple.

The dunes here are not so very high, but they form at the present time a bulwark against the ever-threatening North Sea. To the southeast you will find that the dunes have been nearly washed away, and, if you will follow along the road marked "to West Kapelle," you will come to the spot where here are no dunes and the greatest piece of sea-dyke engineering in the world begins and extends for three kilometres till it meets the dunes again.


The Seashore of Walcheren
with the remains of Ancient Domburg
W
N
S
E
Chain of Dunes in all probability swept away before the 12th and 13th Centuries
Site of Roman Temple and altar to the goddess Nehalennia
Graveyard
Graveyards
Old Roman Road leading over to the old Dunes
Dwellings of Ancient Domburg
Low Water Tide
Sea dunes which are almost entirely washed away
Coast Light
Quicksett Hedge
Brook in the Dunes
Birchwood
House on the Dunes
Oaks
← Highroad to West Kapelle
The Domburg of the Present
Boundary line of Sea-clay
The Low Dykes (1253)
Boundary line of Sea-clay
Low-lying clay ground with mussels and shells
East Kapelle
to Middelburg
500 0 1000 2000 3000
Scale in ells

The chain is as strong as its weakest link. One is reminded of this when one sees the life of Zeeland dependent on the strength of this dyke and the staying power of the ever-shifting dunes.

The shoals beyond the boat-channel were at one time, presumably, connected with the site of an ancient city by the Roman Road, the remains of which have been discovered at low tide. All the finds in the possession of the Society have been made necessarily at low water and found beneath the sand and on the shoals. The altar to the goddess Nehalennia, whoever she may be, is seen in this collection, as well as many beautiful stones from the ancient Temple. The coins, alone, are convincing as circumstantial evidence of Roman occupation or Roman settlement. They are very beautiful; I do not remember to have seen in Italy more perfect ones. The oldest dates from Alexander the Great, and there are many Greek coins. There is one of a late date — it is Nero's mintage! Between these two periods we find a very thesaurus of telltale coins, most of them in a fine state of preservation. There are also Roman ornaments of gold exquisitely wrought: armlets, and rings, and women's paraphernalia of hair-dressing. They are too numerous to catalogue — and a catalogue is lacking for this collection.

To stand there on that desolate stretch of dunes, many of them shored with piles to prevent their slipping into the sea that has swallowed so many of their

kind already; to know that at low tide some remains of a later city — an Ancient Domburg — have been seen beneath the waters; to know that in the centuries to come others may stand farther inland, perhaps by the Low Dyke of 1253, and look out to sea upon the waters that have engulfed the very dunes on which we were standing; to know that this watery burial and resurrection, that belongs to the tale of the centuries, is an historical serial story, the End of which no one may foresee, is to have food for thought for many a day, and an understanding of the difficultes that this remarkable land has to face in order to exist. *I struggle and emerge;* never was there more appropriate device for a drowning land!

It was in Domburg that I was welcomed into the interior of one of the peasant-houses, and made at home by its mistress with that combination of perfect dignity and cordiality for which the Zeeland peasant is noted. It was there I had the delight of seeing one of the little ones — a tiny girl of six — remove her three tiny caps and spirals for my especial benefit; and it was there I had the supreme pleasure of putting them one after the other on the small, smooth, short-haired head. The front locks only are left long, and these are tightly twisted into two hard rolls and made a kind of front cushion on which the caps rest. The little arms and neck were bare. Like daughter, like mother! Like son, like father! Miniature men and women at five and six. I saw a baby of sixteen months walking

between two women in the Market-Place of Middelburg on one market day. She was dressed exactly like the hundreds of women that thronged in the place. She could not stand alone; yet she was dressed in a long, full petticoat, or rather several of them, a long white apron of embroidered linen, a tiny bodice that gave to the little woman the figure of a girl of twenty, a white shawl folded over the bodice, low neck and bare arms, silver chain, little white cap and small gold spirals projecting from beneath it at each temple.

The little boys are dressed like men, with the exception of the elaborate belts made of huge filigree silver buttons, and the silver dog-collars of more buttons about the neck, and the rows and rows of silver buttons all adown their waistcoats which the Zeeland beaux affect.

It is always a pleasure to see the peasants and their children walking along the high dykes; they seem to own the world, for there is no background but the seemingly illimitable sky, and no foreground but the green slope of the dyke. Nowhere can one see this strange life so near at hand as on this far-away island; and on the island, it is at West Kapelle that one comes most under its influence.

We went there one afternoon towards evening, and, leaving the tram, climbed the pathway leading across the meadow to the dyke. There is a whole hamlet on this great dyke, and were it not for the lack of all verdure, there are no trees and no flowers, one could not realize that the structure is artificial. The slope of this

dyke is very gradual; therefore its two hundred and fifty feet of depth on the sea side do not show. The tide was at half flood when we were there, and we could see down into the water and distinguish the slope of the masonry beneath it for a few feet; beyond that nothing was visible. At one end of the hamlet rises a sombre Gothic church-tower, huge and lone and desolate. The church is no longer there, and this tower is crowned with a light that is a beacon for this part of the coast.

"And this, too, is Life," said James, as we walked back through the one long paved street of this sea-dyke hamlet and acknowledged the many and courteous greetings that were given to us as we passed. It was just at dusk; the sky was gray, the sea was gray, the lone tower stood out black against the grayness of sea and sky, and the forms of the women passing to and fro were dark, too, lightened only by white caps. As we passed the tower the beacon flamed on its summit.

"And that is Hope," I said.

"And there you have the third person in your trinity," said James, pointing to a sailor boy and his lass climbing the path to the dyke, the two little fingers hooked together as is the custom with those betrothed. "Life, Hope, Love; they have it all — and having it, they have as much as the world can offer to any one, from Caesar until now. They are to be envied, rather than pitied."

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE PEACE CONFERENCE AT THE HAGUE

THE session was of short duration, and we all drew a long breath when it ended.

Much to Oom Kees' delight we left Middelburg in *The Broomstick* and made a straight voyage under sunny skies to Rotterdam. This gave Lou and Lois an opportunity to see the Maas from Dordrecht to the port of South Holland — a water trip that should be made by every one who would see the busy life of that river, and the approach to Rotterdam. It is an open page of Industry all the way, and as we passed one shipbuilding yard after the other along the entire route, and heard the continuous ring of rivet and bolt and the hammers on the anvils, we realized the immense place that such work occupies in this Industrial Age. Indeed, that one long day seemed removed a century from Middelburg and its towers, the contrast between the river and island life was so marked.

At Rotterdam, by the Maas-Kade, we took leave of our noble craft and its faithful crew. The broomstick was hauled down and given to Neeltje as a souvenir. To our surprise and delight, — for we had missed him

during the last week more than we had cared to express, — Ben came down to meet us and rescue Bizzy, and we had a little supper on board to celebrate the successful end of our Odyssey in Dutch waters before taking the late train for The Hague.

It was a merry party, and every one at his best. James and I were, of course, in the secret, but it was a grand surprise for the others. It seems Neeltje had had her round blue Dutch eyes very wide open since the girls had joined us, and, after the Captain came, had decided in her own mind that a parting symposium supper would be the place to extend her congratulations, symbolically, in the form of an engagement cake, to the Captain and Lois! It seems that her slow Dutch mind, after seeing the young lady's decided preference for the Captain and her neglect of the young American gentleman, conceived the idea that an early international marriage was in prospect, and she desired to show her appreciation of the fact by offering to the happy couple this delicate little congratulation in the shape of a betrothal cake.

Lois had been so shamelessly open in her preference for the Captain's company at first, that I told James it would serve her right to be just a little bit embarrassed, and that I would let Neeltje do as she pleased, without undeceiving her until the end of the feast. In any case, I knew our good *vrouw* would not be disappointed in an engagement, at least, for that last evening

at Middelburg had brought about the desired consummation on the Captain's part, and made Lou just about the happiest woman of forty in the world. She and I sat up till three on that morning, talking it all over, as women will, and Long John kept us company with all his merry bells which, Lou confided to me, seemed the first time she heard them to be forerunners of her own marriage bells! Think of that for sentiment at two score! James had determined to announce the engagement at this little farewell supper, and Ben's coming so unexpectedly added to our enjoyment of the complication. James rubbed his hands in his glee.

"I'll get even with that little minx!" he declared, as he took a private view of the cake.

"I doubt if you can," I replied, and turned to watch her drape the Stars and Stripes, that had waved so proudly at our masthead, into a kind of canopy at one end of the cabin table. Lou was arranging the Netherlands colors above the Captain's seat. I had contributed my mite in Dutch roses and lilies — such roses as one seldom sees out of Holland; for the whole land is a veritable rose garden in June and July, and only those who have seen the great rose trees, with their hundreds of blossoms, in the gardens of Middelburg, or the hedges of white lilies about the vegetable gardens near Souburg on the way to Flushing, can form an idea of the luxuriant growth of these special flowers that grace the Netherlands.

Of course we had toasts for every one and everything: Our Flag and our President, and our Land, and the Queen of the Netherlands, and *The Broomstick* — by the way, the name of that worthy craft was "Martha, Middelburg," and we always spoke of her to others as "*The Martha Middelburg.*" When we arrived at this toast, of course Oom Kees, the nephew-captain and his wife, Neeltje, were summoned, and toasts drunk to one and all. It was then Neeltje presented her cake decorated with the Dutch and American colors flying from a sugar-mast that was set in a sugar-tjalk — and two fat Dutch sugar Cupids were poling the boat through a sea of frosting! It was a masterpiece. Oom Kees was not to be outdone, and laid before Lois and Lou and me little bouquets cut by his own jackknife out of turnips, carrots, and beets — all made into lilies, roses, and pinks!

Lois began to blush, as the cake was placed before her and she saw significant looks exchanged between Oom Kees and Ben. Her cheeks rivalled the beet-rose in her bouquet as she caught the merry twinkle in the Captain's eye. Then James rose and gave, "The Dutch Army." We all came to our feet, and the Captain responded like the true hearted gentleman and brave officer that he is: "The Stars and Stripes — and" (looking straight at Lou) "the one I love who was born under them!"

"Now, I call that fine!" James exclaimed, joyfully, getting hold of both his hands and wringing them hard;

then confusion reigned for ten minutes. In the end, when something like order came out of this joyful chaos, and we could hear ourselves think between the mad yelps of the two dogs—to poor Lump, Lois had given a bone tied with the Netherlands colors, and another, tied with our red, white, and blue, to Bizzy — we enlightened our crew, and the cake was cut with great rejoicing.

"Now, Lou," said James, as he took his piece of cake from her, "you'll have to live under these colors hereafter;" he touched the tiny Dutch pennant on the sugar-tjalk.

"No, James, I shall always sail 'under two flags,'" said Lou, her face fairly radiant with happiness.

"A brave answer," said the Captain, smiling at her. Then he turned to Lois. "And you, Miss Lois, how will it be with you?"

"Only the Stars and Stripes for me," she said, proudly, and rather earnestly for her, "for I love them, and everything beneath them."

She saw at once she had made a slip, for Ben was sitting directly under the draped banner. But she only held her head a little higher. The Captain, however, leaned half over the table, and with his true-hearted daring, said pleasantly:

"Does that apply in the present instance, Miss Lois? If so, Mr. Hardon is as happy a man as I am."

The dear man! He had read that girl like an open book from the beginning! I think we all held our

breath for a moment till the answer came. I took one look at Ben and saw that he was white to the lips, and Lois' cheeks like the lily at her breast. But she answered steadily, looking the Captain squarely in the eyes: "It is perfectly true what I said, but it does not of necessity make Mr. Hardon happy in the same way that you are."

"That's right, Lois, stick by your colors, little girl," said James, heartily, to relieve the situation, and proposed that we go up on deck — and chain up the dogs! Now wasn't that like a man? But I couldn't blame him, for they gave us no peace after Neeltje brought them in.

We had another welcome that night on reaching The Hague and *The Stork's Nest.* Our Trÿntje and Anna Engelina were at the station to meet us and our *werkvrouw* at the house. Lou declared she would rent that house, if possible, and remain there after her marriage as long as the Captain was stationed in The Hague. Within ten minutes Lois and Anna Engelina were fast friends.

"James," I said, when, late that night, we had our first minute to talk things over, "do you think she meant it?"

"Meant it? Of course she did! She knew it was then or never with her happiness. She knows Ben well

enough to understand that her answer was a life or death one for him, and that he would put up with no more nonsense."

"But he's so quiet and undemonstrative, you never can tell how he takes things. No one would ever know he cared so."

"Umph! You don't know Ben," was the usual reply; and I changed the subject, for James' answers were getting to be slightly monotonous, and I made the statement in my first sentence that there was no monotony in our lives. "Well, the Captain is just grand. Who would ever have thought of his seeing through all her manœuvring in that fashion!"

"The Captain's a brick, and I shall be only too happy to introduce him as a relation in America. By the way, has Lou said anything about their being married here? You know I'm due at home by the middle of next month, and I can't wait for a Dutch wedding even; then there are the papers and all that rigmarole."

"No; Lou told me last night that she wanted to be married in America, and would wait till the Captain came over in the spring."

"That shows her common sense. What are you going to do to-morrow with them all?"

"Lou and Lois want to go out to the Peace Conference Palace in the Forest."

"We'll make up the party early, and I guess Ben will join us."

"Wild horses couldn't keep him at home after last night," I said, perhaps a little too emphatically, for James answered:

"Umph! You don't know Ben." And, hearing this, I subsided — once and for all.

I don't know whether James will get the award for the designs for the new Peace Conference buildings for The Hague or not. But neither he nor any other man can do anything better than the House in the Forest, *huis ten Bosch*, as the Dutch call it, where the first Peace Conference was held. It is very beautiful there in summer. The great trees of the forest make a green twilight of the whole place, and the vÿver, or pond, in their midst looks like a scene from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The House itself is filled with art treasures, and yet with all its magnificence it has a home look. We were admiring the great Orange Room where the Peace Representatives met — a fitting place for so high a mission — and the noble series of paintings by Jordaens that apotheosize Peace, when I noticed that Ben and Lois were missing. They were gone but a few minutes; then they made their appearance — and we had only to look into their faces to read the result of another Peace Conference at The Hague!

Oh, but James and I were glad at that outcome!

"It was worth coming to Holland for, wasn't it, James?" I whispered, when I got the chance.

WILLIAM THE SILENT (1533-1584)

[illegible] *Prince painted*

[illegible]

[illegible] *THE HAGUE*

"Yes; and it'll be worth coming again just to see the Captain and Lou in *The Stork's Nest*," he said, heartily; and I perceived his esteem for the Captain to be still on the increase.

"And we must come again, James, just to see those floating gardens of Aalsmeer once more, mustn't we?"

"Yes; and the Middelburg Stadhuis — "

I interrupted him: "Goodness, James, we shall have to come again to go all over it again, sha'n't we?"

"That's about the way it looks now, little mother."

There were tears when we left *The Stork's Nest* — tears in Tryntje's dark eyes and Anna Engelina's blue ones. There was a suspicion of moisture in the Captain's own, as we sailed away from Rotterdam just three days after that last Peace Conference at The Hague. But we whispered to him to be of good cheer; we should see him again in the spring, in America, and there we would welcome him with *The Star Spangled Banner* and "*Oranje boven!*"

He smiled at that, and murmured, reverently baring his head: "Ja, Oranje boven!"

As we passed the Hoek of Holland we watched the last line of dunes fade away and blend with the horizon. We knew at last what lay behind them — all the beauty, all the glory, all the struggle, all the toil. Brave little Land!

INDEX

Aalsmeer, a collection of floating gardens, 164, 165.

Aertsz, Jan Terwen, carvings by in the Groote Kerk of Dort, 271, 272, 273.

Alkmaar, the Lake of, 180; approach to, by night, 180; old inn of, 181; early morning scenes in, 182, 183; a garden in, 182; ancient buildings of, 183, 184, 185; sheep in, 183, 184; the Weigh House of, 184, 185, 186; suburbs of, 185; market days at, 185, 186.

Alva, Duke of, book of orders by, 299.

Amersfoort, 235; Water-Gate of, 235, 238; characteristics of, 236, 237; Our Dear Lady Tower at, 236, 238; water ways of, 237; the Monnikkendam, 237; house at, 237, 238.

Amicis, Edmondo de, on Leyden, 141; on Broek in Waterland, 166, 167.

Amsterdam, the Rÿks Museum at, 65, 67, 68, 69, 71, 173; sights of, 112; the Begÿnenhof, 112; Catholic chapel at, 112, 113; its modern condition, 168, 169; how to see the city, 169, 172, 173; the village of Broek, 169, 170, 171, 172; exploring the water ways of, 173, 174, 175, 176; the Tower of Montalban, 175; the Tower of Tears, 175; the *Nieuwe Zÿds Voorburgwal*, 188; its ancient plan, 230.

Barneveld, Van Olden, birthplace of, 238.

Belvedere, 240, 241; the Valkhof ruin, 241.

Berg-en-Dal, 241, 243, 244, 246; the Lower Rhine at, 243, 244; excursions from, 245, 246.

Bergen-op-Zoom, 278; St. Gertrude's Church, 278.

Bois-le-Duc, 250; cathedral, 250, 251, 252; the Stadhuis, 253; exhibition at, 253.

Braasemer Water, 164; a rustic Venice, 164.

Broek, de Amicis on, 166, 167; a visit to, 169, 170, 171, 172.

Cats, Jacob, a Dutch Benjamin Franklin, 46.

Cuyp, Albert (of Dordrecht), 64, 65, 267; painting by, at Dort, 267.

Delft, approach to, 137; market-place of, 137; the East Gate, 137, 138; Old Church of, 138, 188; New Church, 138.

Domburg, meaning of the name, 316; Roman remains at, 316, 317; sea-dyke at, 316, 317; the ancient city, 318; an interior at, 318; peasants of, 318, 319.

Dort, shooting-court at, 72; approach to, 260; Great Head Gate, 260, 261, 266; market-day in, 268; home for "Christ's Folk," 270; Groote Kerk of, 271, 272, 273, 274; old buildings of, 275.

Dresden, the Royal Gallery at, 65, 67; the best for the purpose of studying Dutch art, 78.

Dutch architecture, 99, 100, 233.

Dutch art, best gallery for the study of, 78, 79, 143; source of its inspiration, 218. See also: Jan Terwen Aertsz, Albert Cuyp, Jan van Goyen, Frans Hals, Meindert Hobbema, Huysum, Josef Israëls, Nicholaes Maes, Jacob Maris, Anton Mauve, Hendrik Willem Mesdag, Gabriel Metsu, Frans van Mieris, Willem van Mieris, Rembrandt, Rachel Ruysch, Jacob van Ruisdael, Ary Scheffer, Jan van Scorel, Jan Steen, Jan Vermeer.

Dykes, breaches in, 122, 282; entail eternal vigilance, 122, 124, 284; devastation caused by bursting of, 123, 126, 127, 128, 206, 279, 281, 282, 288; life on, 162, 163; at Domburg, 316, 317; at West Kapelle, 319, 320.

Ebers, George, *The Burgomaster's Wife*, 144.

Friesland, 205, 207; farms of, 208, 209; ancient costumes of, 215; history of, 215, 216; coins of, 216, 217; Americanisms of, 218, 219.

Gates of the Netherlands: at orphanages, 53, 54; Prison Gate at The Hague, 99, 238; the East Gate of Delft, 137, 138; the Zÿl Gate of Leyden, 142, 143, 145, 160; the Gate of Hoorn, 199, 200, 201; the Water-Gate of Amersfoort, 235, 238; the little gates of Gorinchem, 259; Great Head Gate of Dort, 260, 261, 266; Tholen, the gateway to the Drowned Land, 277; the Sea-Gate of Oud-Vosmeer, 283; the South-Haven Gate of Zierikzee, 288; the Nobel Gate of Zierikzee, 289; the old Cow Gate of Middelburg, 303.

Gorinchem, best entry to, 254, 256; tower of Woudrichem, 254, 255; dykes of, 257, 258; the Linge Haven at, 257; St. Jan's Tower, 258; a town of little gates, 259.

Gouda, the Yssel at, 225; market-place of, 225, 227, 228; the Groote Kerk at, 225, 226, 227.

Goyen, Jan van, 64, 65, 66.

Haarlem, scenery of, 66, 67; "the Heart of Holland," 66; Frans Hals' corporation pieces at, 74, 75, 76, 156; approach to, in early morning, 154; flower-fields of, 154, 155, 157, 158; sights of, 156; environs, 156, 157.

Hague, The, house-hunting in, 13, 14, 15; the city cabs of, 13, 14; site of Peace Conference Palace, 46; winter in, 47, 48, 49, 97; fire department of, 47, 48; children of, 48; cafés of, 49; women of, 50, 51; dogs in, 51; social contrasts of, 52, 53; poultry show at, 57, 58, 59; poulterers' shops of, 63; the Mauritshuis at, 65, 69; the Vÿver, 97, 98; the Prison Gate, 99, 238; the opera, 100, 101, 202; the Royal Opera House, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106; *winkel*, or corner shop of, 109, 110; society at, 118; the Week of Sundays, 119; the House in the Forest, 328.

Hals, Frans, 74; his corporation pieces at Haarlem, 74, 75, 76. Pictures by: *The Jolly Toper*, 76; *The Lute-player*, 76; *The Pickel-häring*, 76; *The Two Musical Boys*, 76.

Hempen, panels on the pulpit of the church of, 214, 215.

Hobbema, Meindert, 64, 65, 66, 67. Pictures by: *The Mill*, 67; *Haarlem Woods*, 67.

Oud-Vosmeer, desolation at, caused by inundation, 282, 283; the Sea-gate of, 283.

Oude Wetering, 163, 164; Braassemer Water, 164.

Poultry, in Dutch art, 58, 60, 64.

Rembrandt, 65, 68, 69, 72, 73, 74, 76, 78, 95, 143, 216, 230; his father, 68, 69; influence of windmills on, 70; psychology of, 70; inspiration from the shooting-courts of Holland, 71, 72; folio of sketches by, 73; his pupils, 76, 77; his pictures at Dresden, 78; favorite pictures by, 79, 80; the Amsterdam of, 175; monument to, 214. Pictures by: *The Night Watch*, 68, 71, 72, 96, 216; *The Lesson in Anatomy*, 68; *The Stone Bridge*, 71, 79, 173; *Tower of Town House Amsterdam after the fire taken from the City Scales*, 73; *Susanna in the Bath*, 75; *Miller of Leyden*, 79; *Ganymede and the Eagle*, 79.

Robinson, John, grave of, at Leyden, 150, 151, 152, 278.

Romans, the, and the Zeeland Islands, 315, 316, 317.

Rotterdam, St. Lawrence's Tower, 111; Boymans Museum, 111; boats at, 134, 135; New Pilgrim Fathers in, 135, 136; the approach to, 321.

Rÿks Museum, the, at Amsterdam, 65, 67, 68, 69, 71, 173.

Rÿn, Harmen Gerritszoon van, supposed portrait of, 68, 69, 71.

Ruisdael, Jacob van, 64, 65, 66, 78. Pictures by: *Lake of Haarlem*, 67; *View of Haarlem*, 67, 154; *Forest Scene*, 67; *Landscape with Watermill*, 67.

Ruysch, Rachel, flower pieces of, 155.

Scheffer, Ary, pictures by, at Rotterdam, 111.

Scheveningen, 16, 17, 18, 81; villa at, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23; women of, 19, 86, 100; houses and gardens of, 20; views at, 20, 24, 31, 87; the inspiration of artists, 81, 86; the Mesdag Museum at, 82, 85, 86; influence of, in the pictures of Mesdag, 83, of Maris, 85, of Artz, 85, of Bloomers, 85, of Sadée, 85, and Israëls, 85; the ancient part of the town, 87; Sunday in, 89, 90, 93, 94; life of the people, 90, 91, 93; domestic interiors of, 92; the Old Church